AL FAJR

JERUSALEM

PALESTINIAN WEEKLY

16 PAGES
IS 40

(USPS 686-630

MARCH 14, 1984
VOL. V, NO. 202

Due to dealys beyond our control, we are sending you two issues in one mailing.

POSTMASTER
Send address changes to
Al-Fajr
2025 I Street N.W.
Washington, D.C.
20006

TO OUR READERS:

In compliance with the Israeli military authorities, and under the guise of the much criticized "Emergency Regulations" of 1945, Al-Fajr is required to submit all material prepared for publication in this weekly, and also in the Arabic Daily and Bi-Weekly Hebrew Edition, to the Israeli censorship authorities, who use this blanket authority excessively. The material appearing on pages labeled with letters has all been censored and expunged by the Israeli authorities. We found it necessary and relevant to publish it on these pages in the foreign edition.

Bombs Discovered in Ramallah Schools; Residents Blame Settlers

Two Ramallah area schools were booby-trapped with bombs — an UNRWA girls school was targetted twice — and a single bomb was found in the main Ramallah square this week. All of the bombs were discovered before they detonated but schools closed and residents took to the streets to protest the terror campaign which they attribute to Israeli settlers.

The latest bomb, an explosive charge placed in a window-frame in the Shar'iyeh Secondary School, in al-Bireh, was discovered early March 12. Israeli soldiers, who were summoned by the local police, detonated the device without causing any casualties. The school did not open that day.

Another bomb was exploded safely in place at the Manara square in Ramallah.

Four grenades, triggered to explode, were discovered at the front gate of the UNRWA Girls' Preparatory School in Ramallah shortly before school opened March 10. Another larger explosive device was defused two days earlier at the same site. Local residents suspected Israeli settlers of putting the bombs in the school.

The bombs were found by Faiqa Habash, the school janitor, shortly after 6:30 am. She was the first to arrive at the school. Habash contacted the school principal, who in turn phoned local police and the UNRWA regional office in Ramallah. Soldiers closed off the Sayidat al-Bishara street in front of the school and munitions experts exploded the bombs in place. A neighbour of the school who did not want to give her name said she heard four successive explosions. One soldier told teachers that while inspecting the school grounds they found "a real big explosive charge." Police, however, later denied it. Soldiers removed stray shrapnel and other traces of the grenades before they left.

Two days earlier a larger bomb, planted in the hinge of the outside gate, was also found and detonated by police sappers. The explosion damaged the lower part of the distinctive UN-blue gate and made a small crater in the concrete below. Ramallah residents, two kilometres away, reported hearing the powerful explosion. UNRWA sources complained that Israeli munitions experts took close to two hours to respond to the call. After detonating the bomb, soldiers searched the school grounds and classrooms for more bombs. None were found.

School officials blame the sabotage on Israeli settlers, who have frequently appeared in the neighbourhood over recent months. Several people who live in the vicinity of the school said they have seen settlers wander around the nearby Ramallah produce market at night. The Israeli TNT terror group, which has claimed responsibility for numerous bombings of Palestinian homes and institutions over the last three years, and increasingly since December, signed threat slogans on the walls of Aziz Shahin Secondary School, located in the same neighbourhood, two weeks ago. The slogans, which were in Arabic, read: "Death to the Children of Terrorists." Israeli flags were also found hanging above the school.

Students and teachers in the UNRWA school said they are worried that more bombs may be planted during the coming days, especially since the school is not well-fenced. The Ramallah Girls' Preparatory School has 320 students up to the ninth grade. Two months ago, a bomb was found in a cola can in the school yard. Police were called and the charge was also detonated safely.

There were protest strikes in Ramallah after the second round of bombs were discovered. Classes in most schools were disrupted.

Light-bombs Hit School

When students at the UNRWA-run Kalandia Girls Elementary School reported for classes March 8 they discovered two Israeli-made light-bombs which had apparently landed inside the school during the night. Israeli officers who were summoned to detonate what were first thought to be live bombs said the used flares could not explode.

The flares had been fired by Israeli troops patrolling the camp on the previous night. One flare broke through the roof of a classroom used by children of the fifth elementary class and landed on the floor. It punctured a 30-centimetre hole in the classroom's roof. Another spent copper flare was found outside the same classroom.

Israeli military officers questioned the school principal and the director of the refugee camp about the flares. No one was arrested. Soldiers took the two objects with them when they left. Students in the school, where almost 1000 students are enrolled, said Israeli soldiers carry out frequent harassment measures against the school and the camp in general: "They usually park their jeep at the school entrance and, for no reason at all, stop anybody going into the school." The Kalandia Girls' Elementary School was allowed to reopen last week after a two-month closure by the military authorities. The grade school was closed down allegedly for stone-throwing incidents.

Majdi Samir Khlous, 7, lies in Rafid ya Hospital, Nablus. Majdi was shot by Israeli soldiers March 11.

Soldiers Shoot 7-year-old in Balata Camp

A seven-year-old child on his way to school was shot in the stomach March 11 when Israeli soldiers tried to break up a Palestinian demonstration at Balata camp, Nablus. Majdi Samir Khlous, was reported in satisfactory condition, at Rafidya Hospital.

Nawal Khlous, Majdi's mother, told *Al Fajr* that her son was walking to school when Israeli soldiers shot him. The soldiers were apparently chasing youths who had stoned them from the narrow alleys of the camp, she said. According to Rafidya Hospital sources, bullet fragments grazed the boy's stomach. The bleeding child ran home quickly and his mother and aunt commandeered a car to take him to hospital.

Balata camp youths were demonstrating on the morning of March 11 in memory of the martyrdom of Dalal Mughrabi who led the "coastal road operation" in 1978, according to camp sources. Students erected flaming barricades of old car tyres, and raised Palestinian flags. They also chanted pro-PLO slogans, *Al Quds* daily reported March 12.

Israeli troops on patrol in the camp intervened firing tear gas and live ammunition. Later soldiers placed the camp under curfew and made several arrests. *Al Quds* newspaper reported that the military authorities ordered all children aged between 6 and 16 to gather in the main square in the camp and warned them against continuing to demonstrate.

According to *The Jerusalem Post* the Israeli army is beginning an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the shooting of Majdi. Although seldom carried out, military regulations require a formal probe any time a resident is injured by soldiers gunfire. Local residents are sceptical of any results, citing tens of investigations that have produced no results.

In the Jordan Valley

8 Homes Destroyed Next to Settlement

On Thursday March 8 at 8:00 am four military vehicles, two police cars, two private cars and a bulldozer drove through the West Bank village of Ain al-Beda, in the north Jordan Valley, and sealed off a section of land on the border of the Israeli agricultural settlement of Mehola. Mukhtar Amin Mahmoud Qassem was informed by the officer in charge that buildings which had been erected without permits would be demolished. Over pleas of the mukhtar, the driver of the bulldozer demolished seven one-room shacks belonging to migrant farmers and the mud-brick house of Tawfiq Daraghmeh, home for his family and that of his son, Hassan. When one of the farmers from the village complained that the Daraghmeh house had been built thirty years ago, before the Israeli occupation, and so did not require a permit the officer recorded his ID number and soldiers searched his house.

These nine families now have nowhere to live while they farm the land which they sharecrop from Ghaleb Ibrahim and mukhtar Qassem. The family of Tawfiq Daraghmeh left to Tubas without completing the farm season.

The whole of Ain al-Beda is concerned over the harassment of the migrant farmers, the first such incident since 1968. Another sharecropper who was living in a derelict van was told he could keep his van if he moved it back to Ain al-Beda. Although the land on which the van was parked and where the houses were built clearly belongs to the village, villagers fear this may be the first step to expropriate land for the expansion of Mehola settlement.

Beit Jann Villagers Clash with Israelis over Road

Two Palestinians were wounded March 8 when residents of Beit Jann village in the Galilee tried to stop Israeli nature reserve officials from destroying a dirt road used by the villagers for access to their farmland. Residents fear that the authorities are planning to seize their land under the pretext of declaring it a protected area.

The confrontation occurred when nature reserve patrollers, accompanied by policemen, arrived in the village and started to dig at the dirt road. Beit Jann residents came from all over to stop them. The villagers fought briefly with workers and policemen. During the

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Friends and family members of Mu'in Bseiso gather in Jerusalem March 9 to mark the 40th day since the death of the Palestinian poet.

40th Day Memorial Held for Mu'in Bseiso

Palestinian poet Mu'in Bseiso, 57, was eulogised March 9 by his friends, colleagues, family members and political figures at a ceremony to mark the 40th day since his death from a heart attack in London.

Over 300 people from West Bank towns and Gaza, Bseiso's birthplace, attended the ceremony at the Women's Union Hall, Jerusalem.

The ceremony started with a reading from the Quran.

Ibrahim Dakak, head of the West Bank federation of professional unions, spoke of Bseiso's militant character. He said Bseiso started life as an activist in the Communist Party in the 1950s and 60s in Gaza and later became a member of the Palestine National Council and cultural advisor to PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat.

Farid Abu Wardeh, who was in Wahat prison, Egypt, with Bseiso, spoke of the poet's steadfastness. Bseiso was imprisoned for seven years for opposing the 1955 resettlement of Palestinian refugees in Sinai. Ali Ashour, politbureau member of the Israeli Communist Party spoke of the poet's experience and struggle in the 50s.

Advocate Omar Yasin analysed the current political situation. He said, "We eulogise Bseiso as the symbol of national commitment," and stressed the importance of strengthening unity among PLO factions.

Other contributors spoke of his life and poetry, some of which were read at the festival.

The Israeli authorities refused permission for Bseiso's family to bury him in Gaza.

GEMAYEL ORDERS ISRAELI OFFICE CLOSED

JERUSALEM — *Al Ittihad* said, March 8, quoting the Syrian radio, that Lebanese President Amin Gemayel ordered the Israeli communications office in East Beirut cl d. The paper said this order comes in light of the Lebanese government decision to abrogate the May 17 Lebanese-Israeli agreement.

UN INSISTS ON POW STATUS FOR ISRAELI-HELD PRISONERS

The United Nation's human rights committee asked Israel March 6 to consider Palestinian prisoners detained during the 1982 invasion of Lebanon as "prisoners of war, and to grant them the rights of this internationally legal status. The UN committee also demanded Israel immediately release Lebanese and Palestinians who were arbitrarily arrested. The decision to consider captured Palestinians as POWs was approved by a vote of 41 to one. A committee representing 24 countries from Asia, Africa and Latin America submitted the issue for discussion in the UN General Assembly.

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Beit Jann

clashes Na'ayem Salman Khair, a woman in her early thirties, suffered a broken arm when a nature reserve inspector struck her with an axe. She was also bruised on various parts of her body. A second villager, high school student Faris Hazimeh, received head injuries. *The Jerusalem Post* also reported that one Israeli inspector was given first aid for injuries.

Despite the fight, Israeli inspectors succeeded in closing the road. Residents were told later by police that they can open it only by a court order.

That evening, an Israeli police force arrived in the village in order to arrest those who obstructed the road demolition team. The villagers, however, stood together and prevented police from making any arrests. One resident reportedly told police that they must arrest the entire village.

The road closed by the nature reserve men connects the village to its northern fields in the Zabud area nearby an Israeli-designated nature reserve area. Kanj Nijim, a member of the village council, told *Al Fajr* that their road was opened years ago. He explained that most of the road was wide enough for tractors to pass through but narrowed into a footpath in one spot. Residents had merely levelled this section to accommodate vehicles.

Nijim blamed the nature reserve authorities for not attempting to coordinate with the village council before closing the road. "If they had notified the village council before they came, things would not have developed into a confrontation," he said.

Residents fear most that their land is under threat of confiscation under the pretext of being a nature-protected area. Beit Jann, populated by more than 6500 Palestinian Druze, has already lost more than half of its land in successive confiscations since 1948.

THIS WEEK'S CENSORSHIP

Following is a breakdown of censorship cuts for issue 202, March 14, 1984:

Number of original articles submitted to censor 22
Number of articles totally censored out 2
Number of articles lost 1
Number of articles partially censored but used 1
Number of articles passed 18

3 Israelis Killed by Lebanese Resistance

Israeli soldiers suffered at least six casualties in an attack mounted on March 11 near the village of al-Ghaziyeh, in south Lebanon, the Arab Voice of Lebanon radio station reported the same day. An Israeli civilian, a public works department employee working for the Israeli army, was killed in an attack March 8. Another Israeli civilian and a soldier both died in hospital from injuries they sustained in attacks during the past few weeks. Two Israelis were wounded in Ain al-Hilweh March 13, according to Israel Radio, and other sources reported that explosions could be heard in the camp during that night.

The biggest attack against the Israeli army this week occurred Sunday morning, when a group of commandos attacked a patrol near the village of al-Ghaziyeh, the Israeli Communist Party daily *Al Ittihad* reported, quoting the Murabitoun (Progressive Nasserite)-run *Voice of Lebanon* radio station. The report said the attackers used rockets and small arms fire in the attack. All six soldiers in the patrol were either killed or wounded in the attack, the report said.

Israeli soldiers closed the area of the attack and prevented anybody from approaching it. Several people from the village of al-Ghaziyeh were arrested.

According to the *Voice of Lebanon* radio station, the assault followed a campaign of arrests in the village over the previous two days. The Israeli army did not mention the attack in the communiques.

In another attack, an Israeli public works department employee was killed March 8 as he was working on a new road near Sahmour. He fell in an ambush of the work party. Israeli soldiers fired back and sealed the area. The worker, David Baghdadi, 50, was the fourth reported death of a public works department employee working in Lebanon. The three others died in a military attack near Nabatiya a month and a half ago. The last died of his wounds in Rambam Hospital, Haifa, March 8.

Israel's 573rd military casualty, according to the official Israeli count, also died in Rambam Hospital, on March 12. The soldier was wounded in a series of blasts in the port of Sidon last week. The explosions resulted in 11 Israeli casualties.

After the attack, Israeli troops closed the port to commercial traffic. Eight days later the restrictions are still in force.

Among other attacks against the Israeli army, minister without portfolio Ariel Sharon escaped injury, March 6, when Lebanese nationalist commandos exploded a bomb near his convoy.

The former Israeli defence minister was on his way to the Israeli lines at the Awali River bridge when the five-kilogram explosive charge was detonated by remote control. Israeli troops surrounded the area and searched for attackers. Sharon continued his tour.

On the same day, Israeli troops shot and killed a 20-year-old Lebanese civilian in the village of Kana, southeast of Tyre. According to *The Jerusalem Post*, soldiers entered the village in order to quell a demonstration. The paper said villagers set tyres alight and stoned Israeli patrols.

According to Israel Radio, two Israeli soldiers were wounded March 13 in an ambush at Ain al-Hilweh camp. House-to-house searches and dozens of arrests were made, the radio reported.

Lebanese in Lausanne Call Beirut Ceacefire

Leaders of all the main Lebanese factions began the second reconciliation conference in Lausanne, Switzerland March 11. They quickly reached a new ceasefire agreement for Beirut. In their first session, which was also attended by Syrian and Saudi observers, a five-member committee was established to implement "an immediate and final ceasefire in all parts of Lebanon."

According to reports from Beirut, 24 people died in a night of shelling after the ceasefire was announced. These exchanges were a continuation of clashes which erupted March 10 between Amal fighters and Phalangists in the southern region of Beirut. At least one person was killed and 20 were wounded in the clashes, according to officials. Clashes also were reported at Metn and Qisrawan villages, east and north of Beirut. A day earlier clashes were reported in the Beirut and Kharoub areas. Beirut Radio reported that two were killed and 27 were injured in these clashes. The *Monte Carlo Radio* correspondent in Lausanne reported March 13 that attendants of the conference are discussing an exact date for the ceasefire's implementation, to open roads and remove barriers and armed elements from Beirut and to increase the number of the five-member security committee.

President Amin Gemayel opened the talks with a call for the end of the state of war between factions and for a stable ceasefire. Gemayel urged participants to achieve the unification and liberation of Lebanon. He also called for the formation of a coalition 'salvation' government.

The National Front of liberals and Phalangists are expected to propose a federal government ruling provinces dominated by different religious sects. They want the central authority to run the foreign, defence and finance ministries. Reports said the National Front will try to maintain the current constitution. The National Salvation Front, headed by Progressive Socialist Party leader Walid Jumblatt, have not offered concrete proposals at the opening sessions. Jumblatt told reporters in Lausanne that he is not expecting quick results. "Results will come gradually," Jumblatt said.

Military Signs Death Certificate for Village Leagues

The Federation of Village Leagues was formally dissolved March 10, ending a five-year-old Israeli scheme to organise locals into a collaborationist structure. The decision was apparently made in military government circles but officially taken at a meeting in Ramallah by heads of six regional leagues.

According to Israeli daily *HaAretz*, March 12, the leaguers, whose number remained limited to marginal elements in the community and to a few traditional clans, decided to suspend their political activities and to limit their work to 'village development projects.' The leaguers' weekly news organ *Al-Mira'a* will also cease publication. During the past year the Village Leagues, which had been armed and financed by the Israeli defence ministry and advertised in the Israeli media as 'a political alternative,' all but disappeared from the local scene. Israeli newspapers reported that the step was taken because of serious divisions between northern and southern West Bank league heads. Internal differences have always plagued the leagues and increased afer the resignation of the major Village League force, Mustafa Dudeen. But the low image of the leagues, their lack of discipline and criminal activities also caused concern in Israeli defence ministry circles. Criticism became open after the leagues' main advocate, Hebrew University Professor Menachem Milson, left his post as West Bank 'civil administrator' in September 1982.

HaAretz reported that the current Israeli 'civil administration' recently notified Village League heads that they were not satisfied with their 'political activities.' But observers believe the charge is merely an excuse to camouflage the leagues' lack of success.

Last week Israel TV quoted Riyad al-Khatib, who succeeded his brother Jamil as the Ramallah Village League head, as saying that he believed the leagues were becoming "too political." Khatib reportedly was the one to suggest dissolving the Federation. League members interviewed on Israel TV said they are satisfied with recent political moves by King Hussein. The Jordanian government had maintained a dual policy toward the leagues of issuing threats but receiving league heads in Amman in 1982.

The decision to disband the League Federation coincided with increased discussion in the Israeli defence ministry of plans to dissolve the two-year-old 'civil administration' branch of the military government.

West Bank residents ascribed the disintegration of the Village Leagues to their natural failure to draw any public support. Akram Haniyeh, head of the Arab Journalists' Association, tagged the dissolving of the Village Leagues as their final "death certificate." Haniyeh explained that the authorities had wrongly assumed "that our people in the rural areas are ready to compromise their national rights."

The Village Leagues were established by Israel in 1978 as an "alternative leadership" to the PLO. They peaked in 1981 when the Israeli 'civil administration,' under Milson, armed them and channeled local civil authority to them, backed up by coercive power. No building permits were given to Hebron residents, for example, without league approval. In Beit Kahil, in the Hebron area, a 22-year-old school teacher, Daoud Atawneh, was killed by Village Leaguers who were forcing an Israeli electricity grid on the resistant village. An investigation into Atawneh's death only began one year later, after the leagues fell from favour.

The Federation of Village Leagues was formed in November 1982. A political programme was drafted in January 1983 under Mohammed Nasser, Dudeen's replacement, but the authorities gave them no chance to develop it. Their 'Peace Party' political programme called for direct negotiations between Israel and a joint Jordanian-West Bank Palestinian delegation. They also repeated the Israeli 'civil administration' slogan of "coexistance between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples."

Since Ariel Sharon left the Israeli defence ministry last year, military officials have downplayed the role of the Village Leagues. Binyamin Ben Eliezer, the defence ministry's coordinator of affairs for the occupied territories, called them "quislings."

Political Conditions Put On Shaka'a's Travel Permit

Elected Mayor of Nablus Bassam Shaka'a rejected preconditions which military authorities attached to an exit visa he had requested to travel to the United States for medical treatment and to attend a conference. Shaka'a's lawyer received a conditional permit March 7 from the Israeli legal advisor to the military government. Shaka'a had intended to participate in a conference sponsored by the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee entitled 'Claiming Our Rights,' scheduled for March 15. Prominent political and diplomatic figures from the US, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia will attend.

According to his lawyer, Felicia Langer, the permit was conditional on that he agree not to travel via the Tel Aviv airport, not visit any Arab country, not contact members of the PLO and not "incite against Israel."

Shaka'a, who had been invited to talk about the violations of civil and human rights in the occupied territories, described these conditions to *Al Fajr* as "provocative," "unacceptable" and a "violation of my honour, dignity and freedom."

He pointed out that "Jordan and the Arab countries prohibit West Bank residents from travelling via Tel Aviv airport." He asked rhetorically how he is expected to talk at a political conference without mentioning the occupation's illegal practices.

Shaka'a lost both legs in a car-bomb explosion in June 1980. Then he received medical treatment in Amman and the UK. Since his return the Israeli authorities have put him under house arrest and consistently deny his requests to leave the area.

Military Plans to Expel Ex-prisoner Abu Ali Shaheen

Israeli military authorities plan to deport former political prisoner Abd al-Aziz Shahin (Abu Ali) April 5. Shahin was released from prison after a 15-year sentence in 1982 and then put under an exile and isolation order in a remote Gaza Strip village.

The Gaza military commander extended Shahin's exile order for one more month March 6 to give him the opportunity to make arrangements for his deportation. The order was delivered March 12.

Abu Ali has been held in the village of Duhnieh, close to the Egyptian border, since May 1983. No one is allowed to speak to him without a permit from the military government. He is not allowed to express political opinions under the terms of the order and his wife has to get a permit to send him food.

He was exiled from his Rafah home following his release from jail under the "Exile Law for Public Security and Safety for the Defence of the Region."

The newly-formed Committee in Solidarity with Abu Ali Shahin, members of Kibbutz Kerem Shalom and his lawyer, Lea Tsemel, will hold a press conference in East Jerusalem

March 14 to publicise his case. Michel Warshawsky, the spokesperson of the Revolutionary Communist League and an activist in the Abu Ali defence group, told *Al Fajr*, "It is our chance to work hard and to help Shahin stay at home."

The military threatened to deport Shahin in 1982, claiming he was not resident in the Gaza Strip at the time of his arrest. They withdrew the order when it was appealed to the High Court. Lawyers said at the time that the army were fearful they would lose the case and would wait for a more sympathetic bench.

Hebron Physician Given Third Job Transfer

In what appears a case of personal vendetta, Dr. Abd al-Aziz Shqair, a former Hebron health department physician, has been transferred three times in the past five months from one district of the West Bank to another.

On February 28, Dr. Shqair was transferred from Bethlehem to Ramallah. Two other physicians were transferred to the Bethlehem health department, apparently for similar reasons.

Dr. Shqair, a prominent member of the elected and now dismissed Hebron municipal council, was first transferred to the Ramallah health department from Hebron, nearly 60 kilometres, in October 1983. No reasons were given in the letter of transfer, which was signed by the Israeli officer in charge of health.

A reliable source in Hebron, however, said that the transfer came on the recommendation of the Hebron health department head, Abd al-May'ed Zir. The source said that Dr. Zir was dissatisfied with Dr. Shqair's attempts to carry out reforms in the department. Dr. Zir was frequently accused by physicians in the health department, including Dr. Shqair, of mismanagement and misuse of his authority, the source went on.

The problem apparently started after the firing of Dr. Hussein Obeid from his post as head of the West Bank health department. In a telephone interview with *Al Fajr* he confirmed that the reason for the transfers was personal vendetta. He added that he "knows that Dr. Shqair is a hard-working and reliable physician."

Dr. Obeid blamed the problem on the vacancy left behind after he was fired. "This gives Dr. Zir the chance to do things on his own without being checked," he said.

Dr. Obeid was fired from his post last year following accusations that he made press statements on the poisoning scare in the West Bank.

Following the transfer of the three doctors, well-wishers tried to intervene in order to get Dr. Shqair restored to his post. The Israeli health department head rejected the mediation efforts.

Dr. Shqair was transferred to Bethlehem on February 1, 1984 and returned to Ramallah four weeks later. No reasons were given.

Dr. Shqair declined to comment to *Al Fajr* on the transfer measures, stating that government officials are not allowed to talk to the press.

Najah Students Halt Classes Until Campus Friction Ends

After three weeks of irregular classes Najah University student council decided to suspend studies March 11 until further notice in order to avoid on-campus friction. The majority of teachers and employees decided the next day to recommend to the Najah board of trustees that studies be suspended until the completion of investigations of clashes between right and left wing students which took place February 19.

In their statement, university employees and teachers condemned all types of violence and perpetrators from all sides. The employees expressed the need to guarantee that academic life continue in an atmosphere of freedom of expression and democracy.

Adnan Milhem, head of the student council, told *Al Fajr* that the students called for a suspension of studies as "the causes of violence still dominate the campus and the board of trustees' suggestions that restrictions on the use of microphones and the use of the mosque for incitement have not yet been implemented."

Students said in a statement that violence should be eschewed and all those who use it to impose their views on others should be punished. "Our university is a forum of culture and thought for all students," they said.

The Najah Board of Trustees ordered the university opened March 10 and mandated an investigation committee to complete collecting information from all sides in the conflict and report its recommendations. The investigating committee of five teachers and the chairperson of the students general assembly were given four weeks to complete their report.

Hikmat Masri, head of Najah board of trustees and a Jordanian parliamentarian, told *Al Fajr* that it is not within the student council's authority or any other organ of the university to close the university. Commenting on the incidents of February 19, Masri said the majority of students do not want to destroy the university. "However, there are some students who do not wish the academic life at the university to continue," Masri charged.

The February 19 clashes started when Islamic bloc supporters attacked students celebrating the second anniversary of the foundation of the Palestine Communist Party.

Druse Celebrate Shouf Liberation

Over 5000 Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese Druze celebrated the liberation of the Shouf mountains, in central Lebanon, and the cancellation of the May 17 Lebanon-Israel agreement with festive ceremonies in the village of Hittin, near the sea of Galilee, March 7. The celebrations, held at the shrine of Druze Prophet Shu'aib, turned into a rally against Israel and the US.

Thousands of Druze dignitaries, clergymen and laypeople attended the festivities from all over the Galilee and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. A Lebanese delegation from the Shouf mountains, here to rally support for the nationalist forces, also attended.

They began at 11:00 am with a prayer in the shrine and then the crowd assembled to hear speeches. The main speaker was Sheikh Amin Tarif, spiritual leader of the Palestinian Druze in Israel, who hailed the struggle of the Lebanese Druze to liberate their villages from Phalangist control. He also called for national reconciliation in Lebanon.

The celebration turned into a demonstration when participants from the Golan raised Syrian flags and placards reading: "The Golan Will be Free Like the Shouf." They also chanted anti-Israeli and anti-American slogans. The celebrations lasted until 4:00 pm.

In most Palestinian Druze villages in the Galilee shops were closed down and schools remained shut as residents celebrated the Lebanese nationalist forces' victory.

Golan Druze leaders attending the celebration told *Al Fajr* that the religious and social boycott on residents who accepted Israeli citizenship is still in force.

Nazareth Cleric Banned from West Bank and Gaza

The Israeli military governors of the West Bank and Gaza Strip issued military orders February 28 barring a Protestant minister, an activist in the Nazareth Progressive Movement, from entering the West Bank and Gaza Strip for one year.

Reverend Riyah Abu al-Asal, minister of the Anglican Church in Nazareth, was handed the travel restriction orders, written only in Hebrew, after being summoned to the Nazareth police station. The ban stipulates that the measure was necessary for "public safety."

Reverend Abu al-Asal, who helped establish the Nazareth Progressive Movement in 1982 and is a member of its executive committee, is planning to appeal the travel ban in the Israeli High Court. His lawyer, Aziz Shehadeh, also from Nazareth, has written the legal advisors to the West Bank and Gaza Strip military governorates requesting an explanation for the punitive measure. According to the minister, the authorities are punishing him for his work with an international fact-finding mission. He said the ministry of religious affairs reprimanded him last month for addressing a visiting Episcopalean delegation from the US.

Reverend Abu al-Asal said he believes that the Israeli authorities also want to pressure him and the institutions in which he works, particularly *al-Sawt* publishing association, the Committee in Defence of Political Prisoners and the Anglican Church. The travel ban prevents him from ministering to the branch of the church in Zababdeh village, for example, whenever he is needed.

One week earlier Israeli police, accompanied by an officer from the military censor's office, raided *al-Sawt* publishing house in Nazareth, which Reverend Abu al-Asal heads, and seized all the files, financial records and copies of books published by the association. When advocate Shehadeh asked that the books and files be returned, he was told that they were being reviewed by the censor.

Gush Etzion Settlers Stake Out New Post

Israeli squatters from the Gush Etzion settlement bloc, south of Bethlehem, established temporary shelters on a nearby hilltop March 4 as a first step to building a settlement on the site to be called Eruvim. The Israeli squatters insist they have government approval for the settlement and that construction will be underway shortly but the Council of Jewish Settlements claim the settlers acted on their own.

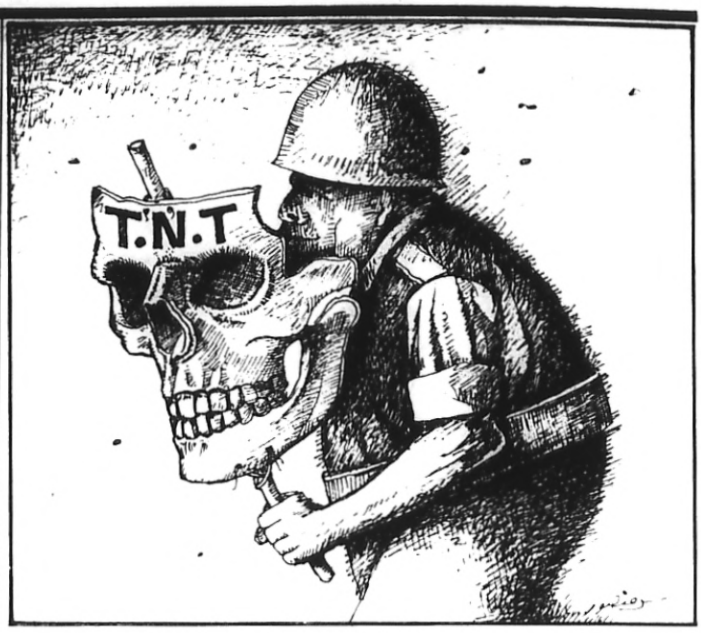
Three tents were erected on a 110-dunum land plot between the villages of Beit Umar and Halhoul, in the Hebron district. Settlers fenced off the plot with barbed wire.

The settlement, which is being established on the initiative of Etzion Regional Council, is planned to absorb between 80 to 150 families.

The land assigned for the settlement is said to be 'state property.' Palestinian land experts say that using 'state land' to build settlements contradicts Jordanian laws, still applicable in the West Bank, which stipulate that state land be used only for public purposes.

Palestinians who own land in the vicinity said that the settlers took six dunums from them to open a road to the proposed settlement.

Israeli daily *Ma'ariv* reported March 7 that the Israeli authorities had turned over nearly 4000 dunums of land to Gush Etzion Regional Council last year to expand settlements in that area. The paper said the land is located near Beit Sahour. Two settlements, Mitzpe Yehuda and Ramot Kidron, are already planned for the area.



TNT Cells Arrested, Massive Arms Cache Uncovered

Israeli police arrested suspected members of two Terror Against Terror (TNT) cells, March 4. Ten people, three Israelis and seven US citizens, were held on suspicion of the shooting ambush of a bus carrying workers from Mazra'a al-Sharqiyya, last week, and the January attempt to blow up *al-Aqsa* Mosque. Suspects led police to a huge cache of arms in Lifta, outside West Jerusalem.

The seven US citizens, said to be aged 19 and 20, are all followers of the extreme right wing Kach movement headed by Rabbi Meir Kahane. At a closed hearing March 6 three of the Americans were detained for 15 days one for 10 days and three were released. Chief Magistrate Aharon Simha forbad publication of the suspects' names or details of the hearing.

The next day the same judge remanded the Israeli group — two for 15 days and the third for six days.

The Americans were held after one of the Mazra'a al-Sharqiyya workers gave police the license-plate number of the hired Subaru car used by the ambushers. The group are said to have close links with a religious school in Kiryat Arba and several settlements. According to *Al Hamishmar*, six of the US group were detained in the Hebron area settlement and a quantity of hand grenades were siezed there.

Kahane said three of the remanded youths have been in the country for three years and received military training from the Israeli army. The fourth has been here for one year, he said. Kahane explained that his followers are ideologically committed. The West Bank "is Jewish-owned land and Arabs have no right to live on it," he said. Police say the American youths are not cooperating with their interrogators. Israeli police have contacted the Los Angeles and New York police departments for the youths' records.

The Israeli group was detained in Lifta, a deserted Arab village outside West Jerusalem. The men are accused of plotting to blow up *al-Aqsa* Mosque in January. Police said they uncovered the group after tracing a special ladder used to climb into the mosque compound. The men were spotted by an alert guard and fled the area, leaving behind explosives, grenades and other equipment. Some Israeli reports now confirm Palestinian reports at the time that several dozen kilos of TNT were involved.

On the morning of their remand two of the Israelis, said to be in their 30s and early-40s, led police to a massive arms cache in a Lifta cave. Police carried away 107 grenades, 80 fully loaded magazines for Uzi submachine guns and US-made M-16s, two mines, several dozen kilogrammes of high explosives and quantities of detonators and fuses. All the material is Israeli army-issue and was said to be in its original wrappers.

Police say they expect a fourth man, described as the cell's 'munitions expert', to give himself up soon. They are also seeking a fifth man whom they say fled the country after the abortive *al-Aqsa* attack.

According to official reports, both cells are being interrogated about the spate of anti-Palestinian terror attacks in recent months and years. Officials say the arrests may lead to 'progress' in the investigations of the car-bomb assassination attempts against three West Bank mayors in 1980. Those attacks marked the emergence of the TNT group. Official sources stress that none of the arrested men are suspected of direct involvement with the car-bomb attacks. Bassam Shaka'a and Karim Khalaf, elected and dismissed mayors of Nablus and Ramallah, both of whom were crippled in the attack, and Ibrahim Tawil, deposed mayor of al-Bireh, who escaped unhurt, have yet to be questioned by the police about the 1980 attacks.

Matityahu Peled, reserve Israeli general and leading dovish politician, explained to *Al Fajr* the political background to the attacks. "There is quite a network of Jewish terrorist organisations," he said. "The former chief of security services expressely said a month ago that government policy encourages acts of Jewish terror in the occupied territories." Peled said, "The most active terrorists are the newcomers from the US." They have been described in the Israeli press as "disturbed individuals" who easily got into the country under the provision of the Law of Return (which permits automatic entry to the country for Jews), Peled said. He described them as "extremists who came to play out legendary roles from westerns in the United States. As cowboys, they fight for a dream and have crazy ideas."

The newcomers found in the occupied territories a place to implement their views. Similarly, the Kach movement is now clearly a terrorist organisation. "It should be banned under the terrorism law which is only applied to the PLO," Peled said.

Israeli Minister of Police Yosef Burg said March 7 that he doesn't think outlawing Kach would be "helpful." He described the arrested men as "eccentrics," and the detained attackers as "disturbed individuals."

The arrests have brought up civil rights issues. The Kahane-appointed lawyer, Meir Shechter, had an appeal to see his clients turned down by the High Court in a closed session March 9. The Israel Civil Rights Association sent a letter to the justice ministry protesting the law which permits people to be held for up to 18 days without seeing a lawyer.

The Dawn

AL FAJR

AL FAJR— Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly

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Al Fajr was founded in 1972 by Yusef Nasr, who edited the paper until his kidnapping in 1974. The English edition was first published in April 1980. The Dawn (Al Fajr) Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly (UPS 686630) is published weekly for $50.00 per year by Paul Ajlouny, 16 Crowell St., Hempstead, N.Y. 11550. Second class postage paid at Hempstead, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Al Fajr 2025 I Street N.W., Suite 925, Washington D.C., 20006.

Whiffs of March 1983

A Ramallah girls' preparatory school was a target of acts of terror this week. On March 10, four grenades, triggered to explode, were discovered shortly before school opened. Two days earlier a larger explosive device was discovered at the same site. Two months earlier a bomb was found in the school yard of the same school. Other schools in the Ramallah area have also been targets for Israeli terror groups in the past few weeks. Slogans reading: 'Death to the Sons of Terrorists' were found daubed on the walls of a neighbouring school – Aziz Shahin. The slogans were signed by the terrorist Israeli group calling itself Terror Against Terror. Israeli flags were found hanging above the school.

March 1984 bears whiffs of March 1983 when a wave of mass poisoning-induced terror swept schools in the occupied territories. Hundreds of young school girls and later other Palestinian residents in the West Bank lived through several weeks of panic when any yellow powder became suspicious. The phenomenon of the mass poisoning was so odd that eventually the Israeli government – which had passed it off as hysteria – was forced to accept international committees to investigate the issue. In the end, they came too late to find anything.

Now one year later a more lethal phenomenon is attacking our school children and no one can accuse them of imagining it. No one has been killed in the latest cowardly game of leaving bombs in school yards in an unarmed community but the objective is not to kill but, as the name suggests, to terrorise. But the logic behind last year's attacks on young schoolchildren – to lead to panic and consequently exodus of those who feel unsafe under occupation – did not work. With the interference and concern of the local and international community the schemes were aborted.

Those who committed the acts of terror – and those who encourage them – wish to achieve in a more direct way what they failed last year through what they think is a weak link – children.

We will guard our children, and our children's future, the best way we can – be exposing these criminals, by thinking clearly and by staying put.

AL FAJR – Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly

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The Palestinian-Jordanian Dialogue

by Hanna Siniora

The Arafat-Hussein talks, which resumed one year after being suspended, were followed with interest by the people of the occupied territories. Palestinian circles welcomed the results of these meetings: the most important was the return of good relations between the Palestinians and Jordanians.

An important point agreed upon was the call for similar meetings to bring the Palestinian and Jordanian points of view closer together. Both parties agreed that the international situation this year does not encourage any political solution. The Israeli army has not yet pulled out of Lebanon and settlements are still being built. Both parties agreed to work towards developing a European initiative with US and USSR participation for holding an international conference on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The international conference will be similar to the 1976 proposed Geneva conference where a Palestinian delegation was scheduled to participate within an Arab delegation.

West Bank and Gaza affairs were discussed during the Amman talks, particularly the best methods to aid the steadfastness of the people of the occupied land and to deal with unemployment among university graduates. The people here hope they will actually feel the results of this meeting in the near future and not just receive more promises. They also hope a joint working plan will be adopted to confront the current circumstances in a practical way and that slogans about the reviving or freezing of official Palestinian-Jordanian relations will be avoided.

However, many in the occupied land were disgusted with the kind of people who met Yasir Arafat and King Hussein, claiming they represent the West Bank and Gaza. The Israeli military government did not allow most of the PLO supporters to travel to Amman to fortify the Palestinian side in the talks. The majority of those who met Arafat and Hussein are loyal to and beneficiaries of the Jordanians regime. They represent no more than 2-3 percent of Palestinian public opinion.

Some members in this delegation threatened to withdraw when one of the personalities from the north suggested that they pressure Abu Ammar to accept the Jordanian conditions in the talks. The final petition was distinctively vague. But the disagreements that occured during the preparatory meetings in Amman led to a decision that the statement will be presented only with an accompanying explanation of the situation and conditions in the West Bank. Gaza was not represented.

Since there are going to be other Palestinian-Jordanian summit talks in the coming few weeks, we want the Jordanian side to be aware that our people just emerged from a confrontation caused by the Syrian government which tried to impose its will on and control the Palestinian resistance and interfere in independent Palestinian decision-making. We rejected this attempt and supported Yasir Arafat as the leader of the Palestinian revolution. We stood behind him so that the Palestinian decision will remain free, emerging only from an independent Palestinian will. We do not forget the precious sacrifices our people made in Tripoli.

We wanted and favoured a Palestinian-Jordanian dialogue. A top priority was that we do not fall into the same tragedy and that these talks be considered not under any guardianship, dictation or control. We realise very well the conditions we live in. We know that active cooperation between both parties, Palestinian and Jordanian, will push forward the peace effort and shorten the sufferings of our people here and in the diaspora by many years. But, at the same time we do not want to pressure the Palestinian side because we feel confidence in our leadership as deduced from previous events. Our leadership knows the situation here, in the Arab world and internationally. If both parties avoid measures that obstructed the previous meetings and work for the benefit of the cause, the results will be responsible and all obstructions to Palestinian-Jordanian dialogue will be removed.

A Turning Point for Lebanon

by Ghassan Bishara
Our Washington, DC Correspondent

The US government, through State Department spokesperson John Hughes, expressed its regrets about the decision taken by the Lebanese to abrogate the May 17, 1983 agreement with Israel, concluded through US Secretary of State George Shultz.

The agreement, which was criticised by most Lebanese as well as most Arab governments, would have made Lebanon a protectorate of Israel and threatened Syrian security interests. Its abrogation became a precondition for Lebanese reconciliation and a ceasefire. The first Geneva conference for reconciliation in Lebanon authorised Amin Gemayel to go to the US to reopen or amend the agreement. Upon his arrival in Washington, DC, the day Israeli Premier Yitzhak Shamir departed, Gemayel found the administration fully supportive of the agreement, adopting Shamir's position that not a word in the agreement would be changed. In addition to Israeli refusal to reopen, amend or abrogate the agreement, George Shultz stuck to it, it being the only foreign policy 'achievement' he had brought about. The agreement, Shultz and his aides kept saying, is "a good one."

Even when it became clear that the agreement was an obstacle to reconciliation, one of the US objectives in Lebanon, Shultz refused to budge, even at the risk of US Marine casualties. The more the US and Israel affirmed the agreement, the more the Lebanese nationalist forces became determined that it should be abrogated. The agreement was seen by more Arabs as a reward to Israel for its invasion of Lebanon and the consequences arising from it. Arab allies of the US criticised Israel's presence in Lebanon, which the agreement was to end. Israel's presence was called "the root and cause" of problems in Lebanon by President Mubarak of Egypt. Saudi Crown Prince Adbullah called for Israel's "prompt and unconditional" withdrawal from Lebanon. Still hanging on to the ill-fated agreement, Shultz issued his warning to the Lebanese and Syrians when it became clear that his product was going to be dealt a *coup de grace*. On February 15, Shultz read a statement at the State Department and in addition to reaffirming US support of it, said, "Those who would dispense with this agreement must bear the responsibility for finding alternative formulas for Israeli withdrawal."

With the fighting in Lebanon escalating, the government resigned and the US-trained Lebanese army disintegrated. This was followed by the retreat of the MNF troops from west Beirut, practically destroying the likelihood of any reconciliation among the parties to the conflict. The only remaining dim hope was to abrogate the agreement.

continued on page 13

OPINION

AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request.

The Failure of Gunboat Diplomacy

by Frank Collins

The Reagan administration has committed the most serious military and political blunders in Lebanon that have been made by any administration since Vietnam. The first was the commitment of the US Marines into the untenable position of 'sitting ducks' in a hostile environment near the Beirut airport with no discernable military task.

The Marines finally had to be withdrawn for political reasons, exposing the stupidity of introducing them in the first place. Reagan had the option of letting Congress pass legislation which would have required the Marines' withdrawal on grounds other than military necessity. Instead, he chose to go it alone and now has the job of explaining the whole affair in an election year.

The second blunder is the shelling of the Shouf mountains by American warships, which accomplished the nearly impossible task of inciting the diverse anti-government factions into a vocal anti-American consensus.

Again, the American government is on the side of an affluent minority. The Maronite domination of the government is opposed by the Shi'ites (about 50 percent of the population), the Sunnis (20 percent), the Druze (10 percent) and many of the Christians: in all, more than three-quarters of the people.

On February 6, my Sunni friend Yasser Hassad came to me and said, "The news is very bad. Come home with me." We could hear shelling a few kilometres away and got into Yasser's car. As we proceeded two kilometres south of Hamra we heard small arms fire on adjoining streets. As we reached the front door, the shelling from the National Army and the Phalange militia became really intense and we dived inside.

This was the night that the National Army split into pro- and anti-government wings and the Amal militia, mainly Shi'ite, took over control of West Beirut.

We spent the night in the basement of the apartment house, hearing neighbouring apartment houses being hit by shells and the sounds of street fighting in front of us. Our neighbours were Sunnis, Shi'ites and Druze. There were no visible religious or political differences and everyone seemed to be the best of friends. They were all friendly to me, an American with a British accent.

I do not understand Arabic but the words occurring more frequently in the broadcasts were "America," "New Jersey," "Marines," "Israelis" and "fascists." In spite of the fact that we were being shelled by the National Army and the Phalange from the beach, a kilometre away, the main indignation was against the American warships, whose shells were overhead on their way to Druze positions in the Shouf.

As I was later to discover, the participation of the US navy in the civil war unanimously alienated the people of west Beirut. President Reagan may have prolonged the life of the Gemayel regime but at the cost of the remaining respect of the predominant majority of the Lebanese people.

Frank Collins
Washington, DC

Living in an Atmosphere of Zionism

by Michal Schwartz

"You shouldn't talk to the Arabs. They kidnap children. Let's take another way so they won't see us," said Limor, eight years old, to my daughter. They were returning from school passing by Arab construction workers, last summer. "What did you do?" I asked. "I told her it wasn't true, but we took another road anyway," said my daughter. Although she knew better, she couldn't resist that all encompassing pressure. Already at the age of eight she sensed that Limor's position was legitimate and strong whereas hers was not. Had she tried to defend it, she would have been isolated and placed outside that close circle of the Israeli family.

Both girls went to Galil School, the pride of the Neve Zahal suburb. Neve Zahal means the 'Israel Defence Force Pasture.' Only Jewish children study in this school, a situation reflecting the almost complete residential segregation in Israel, where all primary schools are either Arab or Jewish. Most Jewish children have no opportunity to meet an Arab child in the classroom or in the playground.

At the beginning of the year each class was given a special project of learning about Galilee, after which the school is named. Galilee is one of the most beautiful parts of *Eretz Israel*, they were told. It's hilly, green and has plenty of water. But it is not sufficiently settled with Jews and must be Judaised. Jews have to love it and go to live in it so it won't remain empty. They were also told of the brave Kiryat Shemonah children who had to sleep in shelters because the Arabs were shelling them. They were taught to feel solidarity with the Kiryat Shemonah children. Later in the year they learned about the *halutzim* (pioneers) who settled the land and fought the bandits, one hand holding a plough and the other a gun. Before they came, there was nothing but swamps, mosquitos (and bandits?).

The Galil School pupils were not told about the Palestinian villages of Galilee, those that were demolished between 1948 and 1952 and those remaining today — nor of Nazareth, the capital of Galilee, the only town that remains Palestinian. Neither did they hear of Khalsa, the Palestinian town on whose ruins Kiryat Shemonah was built. The children of this town are grown up by now and their children are still refugees.

The classrooms in Galil School are decorated; most put up pictures of Begin, Sharon and Eitan on Independence Day; some teachers would have them all year round. A picture of the Wailing Wall would be in most rooms, if not all year round, then surely on Jerusalem Day. Other pictures would be hung according to the holiday approaching, having either a religious content or a nationalist anti-Arab message. As a pupil, a teacher and a mother I cannot recall having ever seen a picture of children of all races, a peace slogan in many languages, or any hint that people of other nationalities, colours and religions existed.

Such an innocent activity as tree planting, for example, takes on that anti-Arab hue. On *Tu Bishvat*, all children plant trees, learning that they are to redeem the barren land from centuries of wilderness and turn it green. They are also taught the importance of taking care of the trees. Yet in fact, the Galilee olive trees, the pride and main source of livelihood of Palestinians for generations, have not been protected. They have suffered severely from economic restrictions, and uprooting, as do the West Bank olive trees today. Last year the Neve Zahal children planted trees in the neighbourhood, on land which used to belong to the Arab village of Kufr Salameh, turned by the Israelis to Kefar Shalem after its Palestinian inhabitants had to leave in 1948. The original Arab buildings are still there and some Galil School children live in them. However, this not very distant history is never mentioned, and therefore is non-existent.

The Galil School fosters a spirit of volunteering and community togetherness. Every year the teachers take the children out to clean the neglected Gan Habanim garden. It was planted in memory of Neve Zahal soldiers who died in wars. Occasionally the Tel Aviv municipality sends Palestinian workers to tend the garden. This year it was a group of very young workers from the West Bank, whom all the children passed by in a hurry and ignored.

One of the high points of the year is a new holiday introduced only after 1967 — Jerusalem Day. For millions all over the world Jerusalem stands for the birth of great cultures and religions, a city symbolising the common spiritual basis for Jews, Christians and Muslims as well as the desire for peace. Yet Israeli schools celebrate Jerusalem Day on June 6, when Jerusalem was "united and liberated from the hands of foreigners by the IDF." Israeli children celebrate it not in the spirit of tolerance and coexistence but in connection with war and occupation. On Jerusalem Day fourth grade pupils travel to Jerusalem to visit Herzl's grave and the Wailing Wall on the western edge of *Haram al-Sharif*, where the *al-Aqsa* Mosque is. Younger children have ceremonies, larger each year, when they sing "Jerusalem of Gold." This song, which became a second national anthem after the 1967 war, tells of the dried up wells of Jerusalem, of the empty markets (empty of whom?), the sight of the deserted Temple (full of thousands of Muslims praying in their second holiest mosque), all liberated now.

In the kindergarten the children build toy models of the Second Temple which was destroyed by the Romans and are told that the day will come when the Third Temple will be built. It is not clear what obstructs its building since they are not to know about the existence of the *al-Aqsa* Mosque. Neither are the children to know that in order to clear a space in front of the Wailing Wall, dozens of Arab families of the *Mughrabi* quarter were evacuated and their homes demolished.

The Galil School offers free flute lessons to develop the children's musical talents. Last March the pupils were dressed up to perform before Israel's outgoing president, Mr. Navon, at the Danny House community centre. Navon, a Labour party man, built his career, being an Arabic-speaking Oriental Jew, as Ben Gurion's special advisor for Arab affairs. Danny House was built in memory of Israeli soldiers who died in the 1973 war. During the previous summer all the Galil schoolchidren were invited to participate in summer activities whose high point was a special exhibition of IDF artillery, in order to bring them closer to the subject.

A few months before the 1973 war the Neve Zahal community was engaged in a struggle against Tel Aviv municipality which had decided to transfer the children to another school. It was a militant struggle that included road blocking, sit-ins and a two-month strike in which the children stayed at home. When the war broke out the struggle stopped abruptly. At times like this — we were told — we must stick together. The parents' committee changed its role and went from door to door to collect contributions for LIBY (my heart). LIBY is an IDF fund which became a national propaganda campaign during the war. Children in the classes were also asked to contribute and bring presents for the soldiers. Anyone who didn't was in an embarrassing position.

When the Peace for Galilee war erupted, the children of Galil School were well prepared for it. They already knew all there was to know about the Jewish settlers for whom it was fought and knew nothing of the Galilee Palestinians, whom, among others, the war seeked to crush. The children of Sabra and Shatila were not mentioned in Galil School.

I have no doubt that as long as Israeli children go on studying in this way, wars will continue. Yet thousands of Israelis felt revulsion and opposition to what their country was doing in Lebanon and took to the streets. The peace movement has not looked into education yet, and the battle in this arena is not simple. Yet it is essential if peace is to be realised.

American money. Short carrots leading to the promotion of US policy or humanitarian aid for the long-term improvement of the 'quality of life' in the occupied territories? Hanna Assadi looks at all the fingers grabbing at the US development-aid pie.

US Aid in the West Bank:

A Trickle for Development

On the last day of January this year, US under-secretary of state for political affairs Lawrence Eagleburger spoke to the National Council of Jewish Women, only days after President Ronald Reagan announced he was to run for re-election. Eagleburger spent most of his speech lambasting the Syrians and supporting the US's multinational forces role in Lebanon. Tucked away on page 16 of the speech lay the only reference to the occupied territories.

"I cannot speak to you today about the Palestinian problem without mentioning the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza. Their well-being and desire for a greater voice in determining their own destiny must be another issue of moral concern for us, even as we continue to seek a negotiated solution to the status of the occupied territories. If the acceptance by the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza of a peaceful future is to be nurtured, they must be given a stake in that future by greater opportunities for economic development, fairer administrative practices and greater concern for the quality of their lives," he said.

Eagleburger was echoing an earlier statement by his boss, Secretary of State George Shultz, causing some observers to speculate about the seeds of a new US policy towards the occupied territories. The Shultz speech was made before Washington had admitted the total collapse of its Lebanon adventure and the need to create a stronger alternative focus to its Middle East policy.

'Quality of life' is an ambiguous phrase. Discussions of its implications here have taken two main streams. The State Department has talked about giving people greater control over their lives. A small article in *Newsweek* magazine late last year spoke of conflict between the Israelis and the US Consulate in Jerusalem because of the promotion of economic projects in the occupied territories. One US source here has described the 'quality of life' policy as "giving the people of the occupied territories full control over their own affairs. This is our understanding of autonomy."

In a recent article in a Hebrew paper Pinchas Ambari, former Israel Radio correspondent in the occupied territories, said that today the US was trying to funnel aid in the occupied territories to certain Palestinian figures and institutions and through them to achieve the Reagan plan. In the past cash had only gone to charitable groups, he said. Ambari alleged that the US was conducting its efforts "in the dark" and that activities here did not always go along with official policy or Israel's policy.

The alternative interpretation of the quality of life phrase says that the US will put cash into infrastructure — roads, domestic water projects, scholarships for students, etc. — which would improve life for individuals without changing the *status quo* vis-a-vis Israeli domination of the economy. The political implications of this policy, its supporters say, will be that such projects will be supported in communities which do not have a reputation for political activism.

Official US aid to the occupied territories last year was a bare US$6.5 million, according to official figures. This was the highest figure since 1979 when US$6.8 million was spent. Some additional sums have been spent on food aid and hospital and school construction.

Aid is dispensed through private voluntary organisations (PVOs): AMIDEAST, the Community Development Foundation, American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA), Holy Land Christian Mission, Catholic Relief Services and the Save the Children Fund (CARE distributes food aid). These organisations each solicit and draw up their own projects and submit them to the occupation authorities for approval. The State Department fronts the cash for successful projects.

When Israel's military coordinator for the occupied territories, Binyamin Ben Eliezer, was in Washington recently, at the top of his list was an attempt to get greater control of US aid. Specifically he was looking for funding to bankroll plans to remove the refugee camps and an undertaking that his office would have a formal say in the way aid was spent...

It is in the area of military government approval that the impenetrable shadows fall over the question of aid policy. It is officially recognised that the occupying power can have legitimate security reasons for turning down certain projects. Experts working in the field express greater or lower degrees of mystification, however, over the question of where 'security' begins and ends.

Some PVO workers state candidly that political considerations are all that concern the Israeli military. They speak of pressure to support projects proposed by collaborators with the authorities. There were attempts, for instance, during the heyday of the Village Leagues, to get all aid projects channelled through them. Conversely independent projects take years to get approval. A period of three years from completion of proposals to eventual approval or rejection by the Israeli army is not unusual. According to official US documents a policy shift came in 1978, when a decision was taken to shift from welfare-related activities to those which support long-term development needs and expand the opportunity to earn income. This would tend to support the view that quality of life means economic independence of occupation. But, potential recipients of aid look for political pressure to get their projects approved and don't see much evidence of such pressure given the political pantheon in which their star barely glimmers.

The Israelis have very strong, if sometimes inexplicable, interpretations of what aid should be. In addition to this, State Department watchers speak of divisions between Tel Aviv-based and Jerusalem-based officers as to what aid means. Other states, specifically Jordan, have their own interests as to where money is spent.

On the whole these pressure points cancel each other out leaving a *status quo* of virtual stalemate. When Israel's military coordinator for the occupied territories, Binyamin Ben Eliezer, was in Washington recently, at the top of his list was an attempt to get greater control of US aid. Specifically he was looking for funding to bankroll plans to remove the refugee camps and an undertaking that his office would have a formal say in the way aid was spent, according to reports at the time.

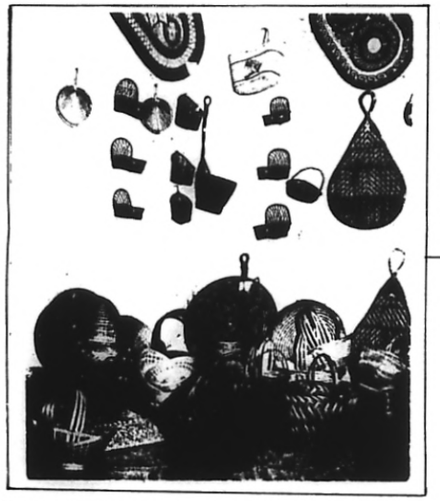
Ben Eliezer was told that the US would not support any controversial change in the status of the camps without the approval of UNRWA and the acceptance of the refugees themselves. Former minister without portfolio Mordechai Ben Porat drew up a US$1.5 billion scheme to remove the camps in the West Bank before he resigned earlier this year. His plans will now have to be frozen.

There is no word about the second part of Ben Eliezer's request. Some observers believe he may get his hands on any aid increases.

Officially, the US follows up the reasons for 'security' rejections of aid projects with Israel. PVO sources say Jerusalem consular officials get little more joy from Israel than they do. Part of this friction could be based on the famous conflict between the Tel Aviv Embassy and Jerusalem. Israel has undertaken a long and successful campaign against the Jerusalem consulate with its largely Arab clientele. On the other hand, according to some journalists, 'sympathetic' is barely adequate as a term to describe the warm relations between the Tel Aviv Embassy and the Israelis. Essentially the Israelis can get anything they want through Tel Aviv, they say.

The joker in the pack could be Jordan. Crown Prince Hassan takes a close interest in the activities of aid organisations in the occupied territories and is said to give his weight to certain projects which support economic development. With Jordan a rising star on the US Middle East policy radar screen this could be an effective counterweight.

Given the virtual absence of interest in exerting even minimal pressure on Israel to take the mailed finger out of the development pie, however, it's difficult to see the 'quality of life' meaning anything other than 'absence of death' in Reagan administration circles. Scholarship programmes will no doubt be approved but don't look in Washington's direction for the projects that will provide work.



Clockwise from opposite page: Women and children from Ramallah are forced off a Jerusalem-bound bus by soldiers at Ram roadblock. No women were allowed to travel into the city on Women's Day; Bethlehem yarn applique; the Women's Committee for Social Action sponsored an event at Ibrahimiya College; Ramallah design embroidery; the Working Women's Committee folk exhibit in Jerusalem showed off basket work; a gift card made by the Women's Work Committee; over 1300 people turned out for the Women's Work Committee festival in al-Quds Cinema – children were among the celebrants on the stage.

Women's Day in the West Bank

The increasing activism of women in the occupied territories was given tribute March 8, International Women's Day, by Israeli military authorities with a first-ever, all-day army roadblock banning only women, young and old, from entering Jerusalem. All women were turned back at the Ram intersection on the main Ramallah-Jerusalem road, no explanation given. The roadblock was largely a symbolic effort — more to psychologically deter women from future activities by a show of force — and women intent on reaching Jerusalem did so by alternate routes. In any event, Women's Day celebrations were spread out over the week and throughout the West Bank, no match for the single roadblock. Festivals and bazaars were held by all four women's committees organised in the West Bank and Gaza, with main events held in the Jerusalem and Bethlehem areas. Each committee's festivities included speeches on the changing role of women, the general political situation and reports on the year's successes. Songs by and for children, skits about traditional women learning new roles, folk *dabke* dancing, prisoners' solidarity messages, popular songs, poetry reading and commemorations for local martyrs were standard at each of the major celebrations. The only recognition of the day not organised by one of the four women's committees was in Kufr Kana, in the Galilee, where the *Abna al-Balad* club hosted an activity. Raymonda Mansour spoke and urged women to leave their traditional roles. Arabic sweets were distributed to the attendees.

Working Women's Committee

The first major activity March 8 was a regional celebration by the Working Women's Committee at the Professional Unions' Federation building in Beit Hanina, Jerusalem. The two-and-a-half hour meeting was attended by over 150 committee members who watched and participated in folkloric dancing, poetry reading and short plays. Many telegrammes of support from institutions and individuals who could not personally attend were read out.

All branches of the Working Women's Committee held a joint exhibit and bazaar in Ramallah on folklore and national industry. On display, and later for sale, were children's clothes, posters, straw goods, kitchen utensils and books and cassettes. The exhibit opened March 9 for three days.

A Women's Day meeting was held at the Jerusalem Electricity Company, the major Palestinian-owned company in the West Bank, and one of the few institutions which grants women a paid holiday on March 8. Two skits were presented by the Jerusalem branch of the committee.

The branch committees in Jericho and Dyuk held a celebration and presented gifts to the most active members. Local factory owners also spoke at the meeting. Songs and poems were recited.

Highschoolers in al-Bireh at the Jordanian Secondary School had a speech-making and singing hour for women.

Women's Committee for Social Action

All branch committees joined in the festival held at Dheisheh camp March 8. A skit for mothers of martyrs was presented in addition to regular festivities. At al-Ibrahimiya school, in Jerusalem, over 300 people attended celebrations marking the day.

On Sunday, March 11, 250 people came to a festival of all the social action committees. On the same day students at al-Bireh Nursing College, members of the committee, also staged a Women's Day celebration.

Palestinian Women's Committee

The Electrician's Union, in the Columbia building opposite Damascus Gate, Jerusalem, was the site for a get-together of the Palestinian Women's Committee March 9. A children's group from Beitunia sang, a song for the land was presented, poems read and a sketch entitled *Amal* (Hope) was acted out. Commemorations were made for prisoners Khalil Ahmed Khalil, who died in prison, and for martyr Taghrid al-Butma. A solidarity message from Beer Sheba prison was read to the group.

At Bethlehem University the social and cultural committees of the student council staged an event at the instigation of the Palestinian Women's Committee. A student spoke on the history of the women's movement in the area.

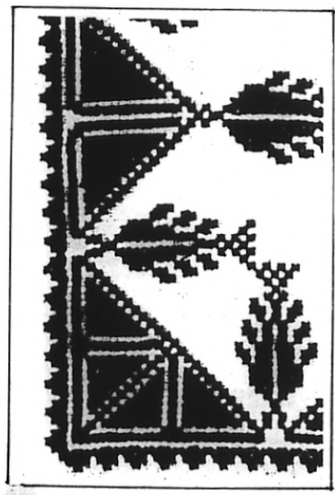
The social committee of the Worker's Union at Augusta Victoria Hospital gave speeches, songs, skits and a popular art show. The Shoemaker's Union held a film show documenting women's struggle at their headquarters in Jerusalem.

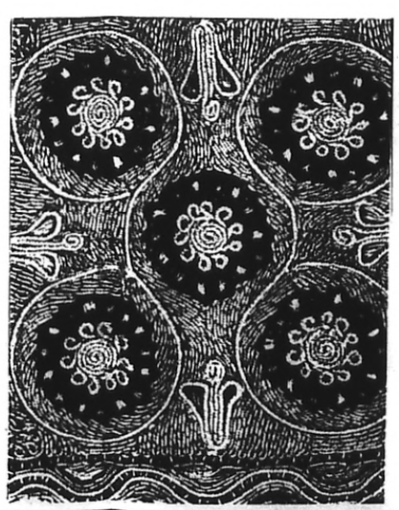
Women's Work Committee

The largest single gathering was for the festival of the Women's Work Committee March 9 at al-Quds Cinema, in Jerusalem. Over 1300 women, children and men were packed into the cinema hall and balcony for the afternoon event. A series of presentations, speeches, music and dancing by chapter committees were all greeted enthusiastically by the crowd. Among the special events: a welcoming speech by the Jerusalem branch emphasised that women should share in the national work; the Abu Dis representative called on unions to help improve conditions for women and urged working women to organise within their ranks; a solidarity speech was made in English, and translated phrase by phrase, by a representative of an Israeli group Women Against Occupation; a national song for children was sung; women from Fawwar camp made a skit about a woman's first encounter with a women's committee; children from the WWC's nursery in Ram sang for the audience; progressive musicians played guitar and drums; the Shurouq group presented more songs; and two *dabke* groups, one of older women from Nablus, danced the rhythmic Palestinian national dance in traditional dress.

The Women's Work Committee also held a four-day bazaar at the Jerusalem Chamber of Commerce hall March 10-13. Items on sale, all made by various WWC chapters, included embroidered wall hangings, macrame, children's knitted sweaters, straw mats, machine embroidery, clothespin trivets made by nursery children and pocket calendars.

In Neve Terza Women's Prison, the 21 Palestinian women prisoners began a hunger strike March 6, to demand that authorities recognise their rights as political prisoners and end punishments enforced against them since their work strike months ago. The strike continued for three days.





The Council of Higher Education is the only formal structure coordinating between institutions in the occupied territories, set up on Palestinian initiative, that has not been banned by Israeli military authorities. The obstacles it faces are much more of an internal nature: universities which have grown up in family fiefdoms are resistant to community control. Daoud Kuttab looks at CHE's parameter of power.

The Council of Higher Education: A Gentle Push for Unity

The long-term occupation coupled with, not coincidentally, the lack of any higher national body to plan, execute, supervise and improve higher education has allowed a situation of confusion, duplicity of effort and waste to exist in universities established and expanded on personal initiative.

The need to coordinate efforts and programmes became imperative when a number of new colleges and programmes were introduced to the five local universities without any attention to community needs. For example, two colleges of engineering were established almost simultaneously at neighbouring Najah and Bir Zeit Universities, despite the glut of unemployed engineers locally.

Council of Higher Education

In 1977 Palestinian educators responded to an intitiative by the federation of West Bank professional unions to establish a Council of Higher Education for the occupied territories. Today, seven years later, education officials boast that they have established some semblance of order but admit to being far from their goals and unable to carry out all their plans.

The council is a 32-member body composed of representatives from the universities and from various national institutions. Sitting on the council are university administrators, mayors of university cities, representatives from the professional unions federation, from the charitable associations federation, from UNRWA-run educational institutes and *Inash al-Usra* women's society. Three Palestinian academics chosen by the council and, recently, representatives of the university faculty unions have also been added.

The council's original mandate was to plan all aspects of higher education, including coordinating programmes and colleges based on studied needs of the area, unifying academic curricula, standardising university regulations and hiring policies and creating criteria for scholarship choices, as well as monitoring the post-university status of graduates.

The council is responsible for member universities, which include Bir Zeit, Najah, Bethlehem, Hebron and Abu Dis Universities and the Islamic University of Gaza, the Arab colleges of Nursing, UNRWA's three vocational training centres (all closed last month by UNRWA) and Hebron's Polytechnic.

According to CHE officials, higher education institutions wishing to become members must meet certain academic and educational requirements.

Anton Sansour noted that the plethora of private community colleges — the newest West Bank fad — are not council members, nor does the council have anything to do with them.

Given its situation of almost no resources, neither does the council fulfill the role of a ministry of education; CHE's only concern and influence over pre-school, elementary, preparatory and secondary schools is strictly on the basis of private initiatives.

Funding

Since its establishment, the CHE has worked hard on securing funds for universities through the federation of Arab universities, Arab governments and private Arab and international organisations. A collective fund has been established in Amman to receive contributions from outside the West Bank. It is CHE's control of the fund which gives it a measure of control over the member universities, as well as providing a financial cushion to member universities when their own funding sources suddenly stop.

Anton Sansour, president of Bethlehem Universi[illegible] the present head of the CHE, says that the council is now moving from the difficult period of foundation to developing and executing recommendations for the development of higher education: "We have had a difficult time in the past six years between problems with the occupation and internal problems within the universities." Sansour explained that each Palestinian university has its special circumstances and restrictions. "We did not begin with the council and then establish the universities. We came along after most of them were established and set in their ways."

Samir Katbeh, former head of the West Bank Physicians' Union and the present executive director of the council, emphasises the need for overall planning: "In normal circumstances, an education plan is included in an overall national development plan. Under occupation we not only lack an overall development plan but we have no control even of the lower educational process." Katbeh pointed out that the CHE was at a disadvantage even before it put in the first day of work: "There is absolutely nothing we can do, for example, regarding the teaching curriculum and administration of lower educational institutions."

Rough Times

Problems with local universities and Palestinian communities were laid at the council's door from its start. Many of them, especially the small universities, complained that the decisions of the council were controlled by the leading universities and ultimately favour them. As the council started carrying out its duties and executing decisions, universities' complaints increased.

One complaint that riddled the council for years was against its composition. A series of articles was published in *Al Quds* daily in '79 and '80 complaining that the council was not representative enough of areas like Jenin and Jericho. Hafez Touqan, from Nablus, wrote that the council should be left only to "academic experts."

Anton Sansour admits that the structure of the council membership is not ideal: "But under occupation we have a different kind of situation to deal with," he said. Appeals from Jenin that a representative from their city be included on the council were answered. "According to our bylaws the council has three seats for leading Palestinian academics," said Sansour. "We appointed (Bir Zeit professor) Kamal Abd al-Fatah, from Jenin, as one of these members." To answer complaints of control by bigger universities, the council agreed to a rotating system of heads. Bir Zeit University's acting Vice President Baramki, the council's first president, was succeeded by Najah's Munther Salah, and now Bethlehem's Sansour is president.

The council also had to live with the fact that a number of mayors, members of the council, could not attend meetings because of town arrests.

Coordination

With earlier problems behind them the council started work on the important issue of coordination and long-term programmes. In 1981, consultants Norman Hunt, from Britain, and W. Pocok, from the US, were invited to the area by CHE, studied the situation and presented recommendations. Among their suggestions was the appointment of a full-time staff to run the council's research and executive work.

A small staff is now working with current executive director Samir Katbeh but according to him, CHE needs a highly professional staff that can carry out research and give recommendations.

The council has established nine evaluation committees consisting of 32 academicians from all the Palestinian universities. Their job is to study the academic situation, give recommendations and review implementation. To date these committees have not come up with set recomendations. Part of the problem is the fact that the committee members are full time academics, busy with their own work loads. "What we need is for universities to sacrifice some of their leading faculty to work on this research full-time," said Dr. Katbeh.

For the time being the Higher Council's work regarding the academic programmes is merely stop-gap. "We are successful now in making sure that no new colleges or departments are added without the approval of the council," boasted Sansour.

University Problems

The creation and development of the CHE has not reduced problems within Palestinian universities. During the past months education in almost every higher education institute was disturbed. A disupute between students and administration over a grading system at Bir Zeit University disturbed classes there for a couple of days. In Hebron University, English language studies have been at a halt for months because of problems over foreign faculty signing Israeli work permits. Najah University and the UNRWA-run colleges have been closed "until further notice."

CHE officials reject the charges that they are not doing anything regarding these problems. "We have no executive power and anyway we cannot solve problems between students and administrations," said Anton Sansour. "The only power we possess is recommending the distribution of funds earmarked for Palestinian universities and even in this we are often bypassed by universities who have other sources of funding."

Higher education officials insist that they do attempt to solve problems at various institutions. "But our efforts are made privately and not officially," they were quick to say. Council officials have been trying to unify university bylaws in order to decrease frictions at various universities.

But one education official told *Al Fajr* that some universities with 'good' bylaws have problems and others with 'bad' bylaws have no problems: "Every university has its special problems, stemming from its immediate environment and the various factional and political elements which exist throughout the occupied territories."

Current CHE president Anton Sansour said educational priorities for the area were for educationally sound community colleges, up-to-date libraries, including a national library, and the need for qualified, specialised faculty.

Instruction in an UNRWA Vocational Training Centre: strong community colleges, up-to-date libraries, including a national one, and qualified faculty are most needed in the occupied territories.

"In normal circumstances, an education plan is included in an overall national development plan. Under occupation we not only lack an overall development plan but we have no control even of the lower educational process."

National celebrations at Bethlehem University: the CHE's original mandate was to coordinate curricula, hiring and scholarship policies and monitor post-graduate status of students at all institutes of higher education.

PALESTINE AND LITERATURE

Born in Nablus in 1917, Fadwa Tuqan studied the tradition of Arabic poetry at home under her older brother, Ibrahim, who was a celebrated Palestinian nationalist poet. Her collections of love poems were followed in the mid-sixties with poetry more blatantly involved with the political struggle of the Palestinian people. She lives in her hometown.

by Fadwa Tuqan

My Freedom

Freedom
My freedom
words I re-echo through a mouth
thickened with rage
under the rain of bullets
amidst the fire's flame
despite the weight of my chains
and the night
I persist
over the ebbs of wrath.
Freedom
My freedom.
I shall carve the words
in the earth
chisel their sounds
over every door in the Levant
in the Virgin's Temple
upon her holy altar
into the furrows of the fields
above the hillside
below the slope at every street corner
inside the prison
within the torture chamber.
I shall engrave the words
into the wood of my gallows
despite my handcuffs
the blasting of our homes.
I repeat:
Freedom
My freedom
let the words be a spark outspreading
covering every inch in
my homeland
even the graves
that I may see
Red Freedom
knocking at every door
and lightning in this darkness
razing the shafts of fog.

Born in Nablus, Palestine in 1946, Hanan Mikha'il was raised in Ramallah, where she attended the Friends Girls' School. She studied English literature at the American University of Beirut and later received her doctorate in medieval English Literature from the University of Virginia at Charlottesville. Since 1973, she has headed the English department at Bir Zeit University.

by Hanan Mikha'il

Demonstration

The tire burns in an empty square.
One child, pockets filled with
Carefully collected stones,
Stares at the army patrol.

At his funeral we chanted
"Mother of the martyr rejoice,
All youths are your children."

Ramallah 1976

Born in Salt, East Jordan, in 1928, of a Palestinian father and a Lebanese mother, al-Jayyusi grew up in Acre, later in Jerusalem where she attended Schmidt's Girls' College. After graduating from the American University of Beirut she left for England. By 1969, a mother of three, Usama, Lina and Mai, she had earned her doctorate degree in Arabic literature from the University of London. She has taught in Jerusalem, Baghdad, in Algiers and, since 1976, in the USA.

by Salma al-Khadra' al-Jayyusi

Dearest Love - III

To Kamal

Dearest love, listen:
that first time I saw you
I said, "she's the one!"
Dreamy eyes, neck like a doe's,
fine waist I wanted to crush,
breasts of pomegranate,
your hair twisted, turned like sea-swell.

Dearest love, how kind love is —
he made you my own.
How sweet his honey,
how perfect, how right
the consummation of our love!

And I didn't even know
who you were, who you really were.
That came later. First love tempts
then puts out our eyes.

Don't say you weren't warned:
"Sweetheart, I want a tender tree,
one that bends to my will,
a demure voice, a girl
to obey and please me alone,
who will make her thoughts mine,
who'll speak in my name,
live in my shadow,
pray to God as if she were me,
ready to die in my place."
There: I told you so.

But what did you do?
You got serious, you said,
"We're just the same after all:
a man and a woman.
I don't need Guarding,
there is no difference between us,
you and I, just a man and woman
together in love."

Can grass grow tall like a palm
and still be called grass?

Dearest love, I warned you
but you wouldn't listen:
you rode the air,
seeking wild unconquered places,
clambered up sheer pines,
saddled Pegasus and flew away,
opened veins in the earth,
looking for gold without me,
you spoke and wrote in your name,
not mine, can that be?

Dearest love, your madness drove God mad.
His stars dim, lightning blanches,
wind faints at your feats of derring-do,
lady, there's no woman among us
who wants to do what you do
*and talks like a man! **

Who am I? You opened doors
beyond my reach, rushed out
furious into the world
(and to think just yesterday
you peeped out through
the cracks in the harem wall).

Dearest love, I was caught
in a whirlpool and almost drowned;
I saw your beauteous face calling me
from all the cities of the world,
but when I turned to follow
love was shouted down by voices
booming from my father's grave
in the courtyard where their spirit
lies unquietly buried:
You never stopped calling;
the screams from the past never let up.
The moment of choice had come.

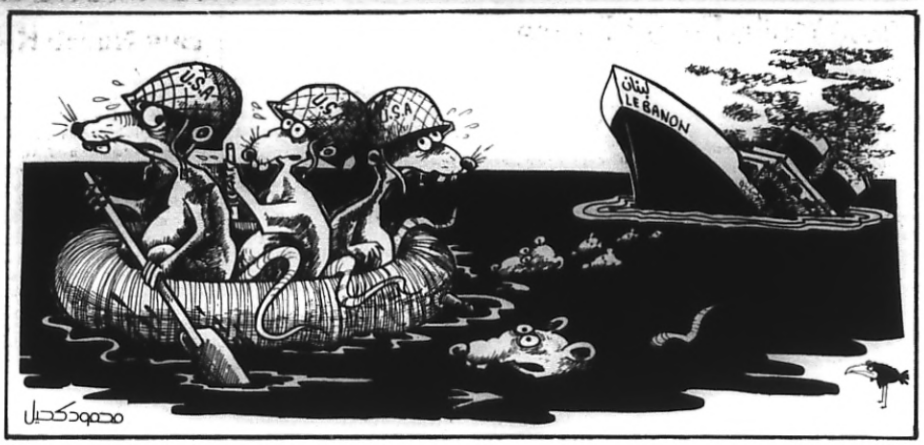
I took a second wife
for my hands to handle,
to make their own,
who hears and obeys without a murmur,
who knows how to put
the muttering grave to sleep.
Dear, the lovely music we make,
she and I together!
My thought rules her,
we are truly one flesh:
one body and one mind.

And you dearest love, I sowed in the wind,
scattered your blood in infinite distance,
crippled your flesh from afar
(and see — my hand's as white
as it ever was — like driven snow).
I drove the loud, lovely words
back down your throat and smothered them,
I held you longingly,
sweet picture of innocence,
in my arms: no speaking, thinking,
feeling, choosing, acting:
no coming or going. No,
there is nothing you can do,
dearest love.

** Who am I? your wasp-waisted sweetheart?*
the mere possession of your hands?

(Reprinted from Women of the Fertile Crescent: Modern Poetry by Arab Women, ed. by Kamal Boullata, Three Continents Press, 1981).

WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS



Local papers focused this week on the latest Fatah movement meetings in Tunis, the capture of members of Jewish terrorist cells and victories of the Lebanese resistance.

Al Fajr and **Al Sha'ab** gave over their lead stories to the Fatah meetings in Tunis and revealed that the PNC conference will take place in mid-April.

Al Quds daily led this week with stories on King Hussein's press conference and on a new proposed Mideast peace plan.

Abrogating the Agreement

Lebanon officially announced yesterday that it has decided to nullify the Lebanese-Israeli agreement signed under the auspices of the US last May 17.

This abrogation adds to the defeat of the US which tried to force its strategic plans on this region through war, its fleets and its Marines.

Israel officially warned yesterday that it intends to take measures regarding this matter. This warning should not be taken lightly. Israel may once again go into another military adventure or impose new measures to isolate south Lebanon from the rest of Lebanon.

AL SHA'AB
March 6

Israeli Withdrawal Next

The Lebanese government decided yesterday to officially abrogate the agreement imposed on it last May 17 by the US and Israeli governments. This important decision is the beginning of attempts to end internal fighting and open the door for national dialogue and the formation of a national salvation government to represent the interests of the Lebanese people, their unity and national identity.

Israel's leaders, like a wounded animal, carried out yesterday continuous air strikes on Lebanon under the pretext of attacking 'terrorist' bases. In fact they were trying to punish Lebanon for abrogating the agreement.

Abrogating this agreement is the last official step in burying all the goals of the continuing terrorist war waged by Israel in Lebanon on June 5, 1982. This air strike will stop what is imminent, which is Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, without any conditions, but with humiliation.

AL ITTIHAD
March 6

Palestinian-Syrian Relations

The statement by Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), member of the Fatah Central Committee, to *Al Khalij* newspaper, published in al-Sharqa, Saudi Arabia, that the PLO is "concerned about maintaining relations with Syria based on confronting the challenges and conspiracies aimed at the Arab nation," confirms important points:

1. The PLO, in spite of the difficulties it faces, particularly on the Arab level, is always concerned with maintaining Arab unity as a national demand in light of the challenges facing the Arab people aimed at its most crucial issues, especially the Palestinian cause;
2. Based on this understanding, and as there is talk now about efforts to improve relations between the PLO and Syria, the PLO is taking a positive approach towards these reconciliation efforts even though they have not yet forgotten the Syrian plots against them, including Tel al-Za'atar in 1976 and in Tripoli in 1983;
3. The PLO has expressed willingness to reconcile, but maintains its right that the Arab brothers it is negotiating with accept the independence of the Palestinian decisions, of which the PLO is considered their physical expression.

Will Damascus keep these facts in mind?

AL FAJR
March 6

Diplomacy-Not Force

Observers agreed in their comments on the cancellation of the Lebanese-Israeli agreement that Lebanon and the Middle East will witness developments different from those before this agreement was abrogated. It is still, however, early to say that peaceful efforts to find a solution for this area's crises have reached a dead end.

It is true the US realised it has miscalculated in its Mideast policies. Yet there is a chance for the US, with objectivity, to play a more active role without being afraid of setbacks.

The Lebanese crisis, particularly during the last year, led the US to see things more realistically after it lived in the battlefields. This led it to evaluate the Middle East issue more realistically, away from total and unconditional support for Israel.

The US foreign policy should be based on what the US learned from Lebanon. This means avoiding force to solve the issues and using diplomacy, as well as influencing Israel since the US alone can do this.

The lesson learned from abrogating the Lebanese-Israeli agreement should lead to intensive efforts to reach just solutions for the region's crises, especially the Palestinian cause, through equal negotiations away from pressure. Otherwise, all peaceful efforts will fail.

AL QUDS
March 7

The People's Will

"It is the basic bridge to build a bright and peaceful future." With these words, Morris Draper, a US official, expressed his opinion on the Lebanese-Israeli agreement as he was signing it with the parties concerned.

The nationalist forces proved to the whole world how wrong the imperialist assumptions are and their uselessness when confronted with popular will.

The trap that the US fell into in Lebanon forced it to pack its belongings and leave. It even abandoned Amin Gemayel and the agreement its secretary of state signed. This led Gemayel to agree to the nationalist demands and abrogate the agreement less than one year after it was signed.

Gemayel's submission did not only give a boost to the popular will but shocked Israel's leaders who were dreaming of a rosy peace which the Arabs could understand only through military power, believing that the Arab people are weak and can be spoken on behalf of.

This is Israel's policy which it has followed since its creation. But this last shock proved beyond doubt that the people's will is the winner and that peace will not be decided by the arms Israel used in Lebanon.

AL MITHAQ
March 7

Adherence to PNC Resolutions

The steadfastness and confrontation approach of the Lebanese nationalist movement, Syria and their Palestinian and Arab allies, backed by generous Soviet aid, confirms once again that the position of these forces towards Camp David was correct and effective.

On the other hand, when the surrender agreement fell, all excuses for (PLO Chairperson Yasir) Arafat's visit to Cairo and attempts to reinstate the Mubarak regime in the Islamic Conference also became void. It proved that using the policy of giving free services to help the Camp David regime under the pretext of winning it back so that it will negate the accords will only lead the regime to hold more strongly to its conspiracy. This was clear when Mubarak told the press when he received Yasir Arafat that "this proves Egypt was always right."

Arafat, therefore, as chairperson of the (PLO) Executive Committee, has to make a move that will solve all outstanding disputes. This move is that he confess his mistake when he visited Cairo and what followed that: the attempts to reach a common programme with the Jordanian regime to solve the national cause.

Adherence to the decisions of the Palestine National Council during its last session does not agree with attempts to reach these goals by adopting the Jordanian programme, which is a proven failure.

What is demanded is not an announcement that the PNC decisions will be adhered to but practical adherence to these decisions, specifically by developing strategic relations with Syria and the Soviet Union.

AL TALIA
March 8

New-Old 'Peace' Plan

The *New York Times* reported yesterday about a new plan being prepared by the US administration to find a solution to what the paper calls 'the Middle East crisis.'

The never-ending US plans agree on two points: to serve the American imperialist interests in the region and to ignore and deny the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and a free state.

The new proposals do not talk about the Palestinian people or its rights. They reflect the official US position which works at liquidating the Palestinian identity and taking away our rights.

While we question that the Reagan administration will come up with any compromise, we want to stress that it will never give up its attempts at hegemony over our region at the expense of our people and the Arab nations.

AL SHA'AB
March 9

Galilee Youths Report Torture

NAZARETH — Two Galilee youths, Ramzi Basiouni and Hussam Safieh, were ordered released March 5 by a Nazareth magistrates court after they were acquitted of charges of hoisting the Palestinian flag on the first anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacres. A third youth, Ziad Sbeh Ziad, 20, arrested on the same charge, was also released.

The court decision came at the request of the city's police which did not find enough evidence against the three youths.

At court, Safieh spoke of the torture he was subjected to while in detention. He said he was hit all over his body, including his genitals. He was also sprayed with cold water and left naked in a cold room. Electricity was also used in the attempt to force him to confess to the charges.

Ziad spoke also of similar torture and added that his hands were tied behind his back while he was thrown from one interrogater to another. He said he was thrown to the ground several times and beaten on his face and neck when he refused to sign a confession paper.

Lawyers Zahi Iskandar and Adel Shehab, who defended the three youths, said they are going to file suit against the interrogators, asking that their identity be revealed and they be punished. (Translation: Al Ittihad, March 5, 1984).

Bus Bomb Kills 3 in Ashdod

Three Israelis were killed and nine others wounded when a bomb exploded on an Egged bus in the coastal town of Ashdod March 7. Israeli police rounded up over 150 Palestinians who happened to be in the vicinity at the time of the explosion.

According to *The Jerusalem Post*, the bomb which caused the explosion is of the kind used by the Israeli army. Southern Police District Commander Nitzav Caspi told Israel Radio that "police are checking the possibility that the bombing was not perpetrated by 'terrorists' (sic)."

A grenade with a timing device exploded in the centre of an Egged bus carrying 15 passengers shortly after 9:00 am. Two people were killed instantly. The third, a woman, died from her wounds in hospital.

According to police sources, only four wounded passengers with moderate injuries remained in hospital the next day.

Following the explosion over 100 policemen arrived on the scene, closed off the area and began rounding up Arab workers. The Israeli government Arabic language news organ *Al Anba'* quoted police sources as saying that the perpetrators must be from the Gaza Strip, 25 kilometres to the south. Later, Israeli papers reported that seven people, including two juveniles, remained in custody for further questioning.

The Fatah Revolutionary Council, led by Abu Nidal, issued a communique in Damascus claiming responsibility for the attack. The communique pledged to escalate military struggle against Israel.

Military attacks against Israeli targets have increased in recent months. Twenty-one Israelis were wounded in two explosions on Jaffa Road, West Jerusalem, February 28.

continued from page 5

Turning Point

The nationalist forces were once again in control of west Beirut and threatened the remnants of the Lebanese army. The US Marines were no longer a factor as they redeployed on naval ships, freeing, in a way, Amin Gemayel to take the final move — striking a deal with Hafez al-Assad. Upon his return from his first visit to Damascus since he became president, Gemayel abrogated the agreement with Israel and called anew for reconciliation talks in Geneva. In return, it is agreed, the Syrians promised to achieve a ceasefire and support the return of their Lebanese allies to the negotiating table.

It is not fully clear if the nationalist forces in Lebanon will agree with the Assad-Gemayel conclusion but it is also clear that they have no choice at the present. While Syria's objective was achieved by abroating the agreement, the nationalist forces' remaining obejctives of sharing equitably governmental authority and changing the Lebanese covenant, and more, are yet to be accomplished.

US Reaction

In a statement at the daily briefing March 5 John Hughes confirmed the Lebanese government's abrogation of the agreement and regretted its decision to do so.

"We regret this decision," he said. Hughes repeated the US role in concluding the agreement, adding that the "proposed agreement still represents the only agreed formula for ensuring both Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon and Israel's legitimate security interests. . ." Lebanon, Hughes continued, "needs peaceful, cooperative relations with all its neighbours." He said the US will not abandon the people of Lebanon or its legitimate government and will continue diplomatically to search for a peaceful solution to the Lebanese conflict. The US, the statement goes on, will also continue assisting Lebanon economically and militarily and will protect American personnel and property. The US, it was stated, opposes the partition of Lebanon and stands by its objectives there. The statement concluded that the US "will continue to be deeply concerned and involved in efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli problem. . .and the crisis in the gulf."

The abrogation of this agreement, concluded with US help, commentators here believe, will have great and negative consequences to the US, its policy and credibility in the Middle East, as well as among its allies. Experts believe that it's likely the US will undertake some acts to shore up its credibility and shares in the Middle East, now at a new low.

Women Arrested for Discussing Illegal Police Practices

Two Israeli women and one American 'temporary resident' were arrested in the central Tel Aviv bus station March 9 for objecting to the illegal practice of random recording of Palestinians' ID numbers, which was being carried out by two Israeli women soldiers. The three arrested women, who requested anonymity, were held for three hours in a Tel Aviv police station and threatened with three-year sentences for "disturbing a public employee doing her job" and "resisting arrest."

The incident began in the Tel Aviv bus station when the three women noticed two women soldiers stopping Palestinian-looking passers-by and recording their ID numbers. The women, who were standing next to the soldiers, began discussing among themselves whether or not this was legal. They agreed that it was in fact illegal, since according to law, soldiers can only ask for identification if they have strong reason to suspect a person of illegal acts.

Hearing the discussion the soldiers arrested the three women. On their way to the police station, the soldiers lectured the three about "security" and "bombs," stating that the women shouldn't have "said that in front of Palestinians," the three arrested women reported.

One of the arrested women commented later that she had once actually had to serve in that same army unit in the Tel Aviv bus station. She said that soldiers in the unit are given a sheet and told to fill it up with ID number by the end of the day. "This is why they just stop anyone, without reason," she said. "Sometimes at the end of the day soldiers will just invent numbers, to fill their sheet up."

She said the reason this illegal pratice has been allowed to continue is because Palestinians would rather avoid a legal run-in with the military. She added that there have been cases in which people have objected to the policy and they have received an apology from the police.

March 14

JERUSALEM — Press Conference at American Colony 11:30 am regarding the case of Abu Ali Shahin. (English)

GALILEE — Democratic Women will hold Women's Day meetings at:
Shafa 'Amr: municipal building 2:00 pm. (Arabic)
Jaljuliya: Um Walid's house 3:00 pm. (Arabic)

March 15

JERUSALEM — Bible Month lecture entitled "How to Understand the Old Testament," by Alex Awad at YMCA 4:00 pm.

MARCH 17

BEERSABE'A, LAQIYA, HURA — Association for Support and Defence of Beduin rights in Israel, Saturday, March 17, all day — painting, gardening, and memorial, in support of Beduin rights. Information; Nuri el-'Ugbi 11, Hahashmonaim Street. Lydda, Telephone: (054) 29041. (Arabic, Hebrew)

MARCH 21

JERUSALEM — New Feminist Solidarity Group in Jerusalem sponsors an evening of information and discussion regarding the situation of Palestinain women political prisoners. Speakers include ex-prisoners, lawyers and representatives of different women's organisations. Clips from films about political prisoners. IS150 admission. Cinematheque, Jerusalem, 7:30 pm. (Hebrew, some Arabic)

MARCH 24

KEREM SHALOM — Saturday, March 24, Demonstration in solidarity with Abu Ali Shahin organised by the Palestinian-Israeli committee in solidarity with the ex-prisoner who is exiled, under house-arrest, and in isolation.

JERUSALEM — Registration begins immediately for courses in French at the YWCA. Classes will be held from March through May for three levels. For more information call 28-2593.

UZI GIRL

The cover note for Israel's leading women's weekly *La'Ishah* explains: "*In two months the reign of Shimona Hollander, Miss Israel 1983, will end. Last week she was mobilised to the Israeli army. Even before her call-up, Miss Israel was photographed in the USA for the decorative calendar of the Israel Arms Industries. Now she holds a new title: The Uzi Girl.*

ARAB AND JEWISH WOMEN DEMONSTRATE

NAZARETH — Nazareth women demonstrated on the occasion of International Women's Day, calling for equality of rights. A demonstration in Tel Aviv attracted about 500 Israeli and Palestinian women.

Speakers at both demonstrations denounced the Israeli occupation and policies in the occupied territories and Lebanon. They also spoke on the bad economic situation in Israel.

جامعة بيرزيت

BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY

Bir Zeit University Summer Courses 1984:

1. *Arabic for non-natives* A. (Beginners)
2. *Arabic for non-natives* B. (1 smstr. Arabic)
3. *Colloquial Arabic.* (Beginners)
4. *Archaeology of Palestine.* (Introduction)
5. *Problems of Development under Occupation.*

(Social Science-based course.)

The courses are six weeks long: July 1—August 31. Tuition: $1[illegible] per course, payable on registration ($20 deposit required w[illegible] application). Accomodation available at $115 for 6 wee[illegible] Contact, by April 30: Summer Programme, Office of [illegible] Registrar, Bir Zeit University, PO Box 14, Bir Zeit, West Bank [illegible] Israel.

WEEKLY REVIEW

March 5, 1984

ISRAELI BUSES STONED

TEL AVIV — Israel Radio said two Israeli buses were stoned as they passed through Ramallah. One was a military bus and the other an Egged bus. The radio said windows from both buses were damaged. Several residents were rounded up following the stoning.

ASKALAN PRISONERS STRIKE

JERUSALEM — Four hundred Palestinian political prisoners at Askalan prison went on a hunger strike to protest prison conditions.

NEW SETTLEMENT

HEBRON — Israel Radio said a new settlement is under construction near Gush Etzion settlement, in the Arroub district. The new settlement will be called 'Orfeem.'

FREE AT LAST

JENIN — A town arrest order imposed on Jenin resident and former long-term administrative detainee Ali Awad Jamal, March 2, 1982, was lifted.

IBRAHIMIYA ACCREDITED

JERUSALEM — Jordan's Higher Education Council accredited the new Ibrahimiya College on the Mount of Olives. The college president, Nihad Abu Gharbieh, returned from Amman following a brief working visit during which he met with Jordanian education officials.

SCHOOL TURNED INTO ARMY POST

JERUSALEM — *Al-Kindy* Elementary School in the village of Bani Na'im, near Hebron, was converted by the Israeli military into an army post in the village. Village residents have been complaining that the Israeli army continually harasses them at night by knocking at their doors, shooting in the air and lighting the skies.

Bani Na'im village is near Kiryat Arba settlement.

LEBANESE CLOSE PALESTINIAN SCHOOL

SIDON — Reports from south Lebanon said the Israeli-trained Lebanese militias closed a Palestinian school in Sidon by force and expelled all 200 students.

TREES VANDALISED

BEIT JALA — Twenty apple, almond, apricot and plum trees were cut down by unknown vandals in al-Wad area of Beit Jala.

ANTI-ARABS SENTENCED

TEL AVIV — Haifa District Court passed sentences on four Israelis, former students at Haifa University, for beating Arab students. The four, members of the 'Israel For Us' movement, were given suspended prison terms and fined IS50,000.

FIVE YEARS FOR MEMBERSHIP

RAMALLAH — Saleh Mousa Nakhleh, from Jalazon refugee camp, was sentenced to four years and one year suspended after being convicted of membership in a Palestinian organisation.

BREAD DOESN'T RISE IN NABLUS

NABLUS — Owners of bakeries in Nablus said they will not raise the price of bread because of the bad economic situation. Basic food prices were raised two days ago between 11-35 percent.

CAR ARSONED

BEIT JALA — Fire destroyed a car owned by Ahmad Isma'il A'araj from Walaja, near Beit Jala. No reason was given for the fire.

NO-MAN'S LAND

GAZA — Reports from Canada camp said Egypt has confiscated a 200-metre belt of land on its side of the border with Gaza to establish a buffer.

FIREBOMBS

RAMALLAH — A firebomb was thrown yesterday at the house

March 7, 1984

MILITARY STONED IN NABLUS

NABLUS — Stores shut in the Old City of Nablus following clashes between youths and Israeli soldiers during which the youths stoned Israeli army vehicles and the soldiers responded with bullets. Several people were arrested.

NEW WEST BANK SETTLEMENTS

TEL AVIV — The Israeli military gave the local council of Kfar Etzion settlement more than 4000 dunums of confiscated Arab-owned land with the intention of expanding settlement there. A new settlement, Mitzpe Yehuda, is planned to be built there, near the town of Beit Sahour.

Another 3000 dunums of land were set aside to build another settlement named Ramot Kidron.

EGYPT RETURNS UNIVERSITY APPLICATIONS

GAZA — Out of 200 applications to enter Egyptian universities for Gaza high school graduates, 180 were returned and believed rejected without any explanation. Egypt previously promised the Gaza department of education that it will admit Gaza students to its universities.

ELECTRICITY COMPANY TO INCREASE POWER

JERUSALEM — The Jerusalem Electricity Company is expected to be given permission to build a new generating station after the Israeli National Planning Council agreed that the company increase its power output.

SEVEN YOUTHS ARRESTED

HaAretz said seven youths from Wadi 'Ara have been arrested and charged with burning 30 Israeli vehicles and a bus.

The Wadi al-Joz centre of the Working Women's Committee opened a three-day folkloric exhibit Saturday, March 9, to mark the occasion of International Women's Day.

UNION OF PALESTINIAN COMMITTEES FOR WOMEN'S WORKERS IN THE WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP

March 6, 1984

TABA TAKEN

KUWAIT — A Kuwait News Agency report said the disputed area of Taba, in the Sinai, has been 'merged' with the Israeli port city of Eilat. Taba was supposed to be returned to Egypt during the last phase of the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai, according to the Camp David accords.

of a Kalandia camp *mukhtar* but exploded 30 metres away from it, according to Israel Radio. Another firebomb was thrown at an Israeli car north of Ramallah, the radio added. No one was reported hurt in either attack.

MILITARY THREATEN TO CLOSE CLUB

BEIT SAHOUR — The Israeli military threatened to close the Beit Sahour Orthodox Club without giving any reason. Soldiers spent four hours in the club preventing members from entering it.

16 YOUTHS SENTENCED

WEST BANK — Nablus military court passed sentences yesterday on 16 youths from the village of Dinnaba, in the Tulkarm district, on charges of membership in a Palestinian organisation, possession of arms, planning to carry out military operations and raising the Palestinian flag. The sentences ranged between one month and nine years.

March 8, 1984

POLICE ARREST ATTACKER

JERUSALEM — Police said they are holding the person who put the bombs in a store on Jaffa Road 10 days ago. The police said the arrested man was one of the 21 injured in the explosion. He is believed to be from Jerusalem and was carrying a forged Lebanese passport.

PARENTS THREATENED

JALAZON — Parents in the Jala-

zon refugee camp were summoned by the military government in Ramallah and warned they would be punished heavily if stone-throwing at Israeli vehicles continued from the camp.

March 9, 1984

PRISONERS ESCAPE

BEER SHEBA — Two Egyptian prisoners sentenced for one month in Israel for illegal entry escaped yesterday morning while in the interrogation room in Beer Sheba prison. One prisoner, a resident of Rafah, was re-captured shortly afterwards; the other is still at large.

Israel Radio said both prisoners had finished their term but because Egypt refused to grant them re-entry, they were returned to jail for three more months.

The radio also said an explosion occurred yesterday morning at Beer Sheba prison caused by a small explosive device. Police started investigating the explosion, according to the radio.

AL FAJR BOMBER CAUGHT

JERUSALEM — A Jewish terrorist described to police an attack he carried out on *Al Fajr* offices last August 2. The firebomb attack caused slight damage before it was extinguished by newspaper employees. As the police were leading the suspect away, he yelled, "There is no Palestine."

BOMB PLANTED IN RAMALLAH

RAMALLAH — A time bomb was discovered on Sahl Street in Ramallah. The bomb was detonated without causing any damage.

CHILDREN'S DRAWINGS

BEIT SAHOUR — An exhibition of children's paintings opened at the Arab Orthodox Club in Beit Sahour. Several schools are participating in the exhibition which will continue for two days.

The Committee for Women's Equality and Peace attracted 2000 people for a demonstration in Tel Aviv on International Women's Day. The placards read: "Equal Rights for Arab and Jewish Women," "Devote Budgets to Children, Not to Occupation," and "Greetings to the Palestinian Women in the Occupied Territories."

HEBRON FARMERS COMPLAIN OF BAD SEASON

HEBRON — Hebron farmers appealed for aid because of the dry winter season. The farmers said the lack of rain cut down on the availability of pastures for their cattle and threatens 220,000 sheep.

March 10, 1984

PALESTINIAN ASSAULTED

JERUSALEM — A Palestinian was hospitalised after an attack by Jewish fanatics in Mahane Yehuda, West Jerusalem.

PRISONER'S CHILDREN TO ALGIERS

JERUSALEM — Former Palestinian political prisoner Zakiyya Shamout was granted permission from the Algerian government to receive her five children in Algiers. The Jerusalem office of the Red Cross received entry visas to Algiers for Shamout's five children, who live in Nazareth. Shamout was released during the PLO-Israeli prisoner exchange last November.

March 11, 1984

BOMB IN GAZA

A bomb exploded near an Israeli car in Gaza, Israel Radio said. The radio added that no one was hurt.

"PLO WILL WIN"

A bridge leading to Beit Natofa settlement in the Galilee was damaged with axes, Israel Radio said. A slogan "The PLO Will Win" was written on the bridge.

DARWISH HOSPITALISED

VIENNA — Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish was admitted to hospital in Vienna after he suffered a heart attack. Darwish suffered three heart attacks in the past two days while in Cyprus preparing to travel to England to attend special ceremonies commemorating the late Palestinian poet Mu'in Bseiso who recently died in London. He was flown to Vienna for immediate treatment.

CAR EXPLOSION IN TEL AVIV

TEL AVIV — Israel Radio said a time bomb went off last night in a car in Tel Aviv, setting it on fire. No one was hurt in the explosion.

AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIAL IN SCHOOLS

QALQILIYA — Audio-visual material will be used in a Qalqiliya school soon. The Parents-Teachers Council of al-Sa'adieh Secondary School purchased a new video camera for educational purposes. A video-tape library is also planned.

QALQILIYA MERCHANTS COMPLAIN OF TAXES

QALQILIYA — Merchants in Qalqiliya complained of the bad economicsituation during a meeting of the city's chamber of commerce. The meeting decided to contact the Israeli officer in charge of taxes to discuss tax raids and imposition of heavy taxes on city stores.

Tax officials yesterday raided several stores in Tulkarm.

PLO TO OLYMPICS

LONDON — Efforts are underway to enter a team representing Palestine in this summer's Olympics in Los Angeles. The PLO official in charge of athletics said in Tunis that the PLO will do its best to participate in the Olympics. A Palestinian team participated in the athletics world cup in Helsinki last summer.

International federations recognise Palestinian teams in handball, basketball, wrestling and weight-lifting.

OPINION

The Far - Fetched Peace

by Bishara Bahbah

Yasir Arafat's visit to Jordan last month prompted much speculation as to whether his talks with King Hussein might reinvigorate the search for peace in the Middle East or not. Few political observers pinned much hope on the results of these talks. In fact, Arafat's five-day visit only led to the two most widely anticipated and least controversial results. . . a reaffirmation of the need to continue supporting the steadfastness of the Palestinians in the occupied territories and the need to continue the Jordanian-Palestinian dialogue.

Assuming that Arafat and Hussein were successful in creating a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation with the express objective of negotiating with Israel over the future of the occupied territories, could that have led to a breakthrough in the plight for peace in the region? Many would enthusiastically answer in the affirmative, asserting that it was a good and unprecedented first step. However, the moment the initial excitement wears thin, it would then be discoverd that a major party to any peace in the Middle East, Israel, is simply not interested at the present time.

The Israelis want peace at a very minimal price and on terms that are not acceptable to the Palestinians. They want peace based on their own narrow interpretation of the Camp David accords and one that explicitly forbids the Palestinians from an unhindered right to self-determinaton, as evidenced by Israel's persistent rejection of the establishment, at any point in time, of a Palestinian sovereign state.

Given the existing conditions: (a) among the Arab countries; (b) within Israel; (c) in the occupied territories; and (d) on the international arena, Israel has few incentives to alter the *status quo*. A serious change in Israeli policies could only be expected when and if drastic developments occur among any or all of the above fronts.

Little hope could and should be pinned on Arab actions, whether military or political, that might compel Israel to re-evaluate its policies with regards to its continued occupation and absorption of the occupied territories. Militarily, the Arabs are much weaker than Israel, particularly following Israel's success in neutralising the largest Arab army — that of Egypt — while politically, the Arab countries are too divided and too preoccupied with themselves to agree on a common market system, let alone a united Arab front against Israel.

Within Israel itself, so long as the existing balance of power continues, there is little chance of serious moderation in Israeli policies with regards to the occupied territories and the Palestine question. Unless there is a drastic change both in Israel's public opinion and in the parties controlling the Israeli government, Israel's policy will continue on its present course.

The situation within the occupied territories is largely dictated by the internal divisions among the Palestinians and Israel's ability to maintain tight security. As long as these two conditions persist, the cost of maintaining control over the occupied territories would be tolerable. By contrast, Israel is paying a high price, both in human and material losses, for its occupation of Lebanon.

On the international arena few countries, including Western European ones, have much influence with Israel. The United States, which is probably the only country that could force Israel into altering its policies, has no incentive to do so. On one hand, this year is a US presidential election year and no president who wants to win over the American Jewish vote would want to put pressure on Israel. On the other hand, the Arab world does not pre-condition the sale of its oil to the US or the buying of US goods to a solution of the Palestinian problem. The US gets the oil it wants and the markets for its goods without having to pay a political price. Hence, with the absence of Arab pressure, why should the US put up a fight with Israel over the future of the occupied territories?

In conclusion, there are hardly any incentives for Israel to alter its policies with regards to a solution of the Palestinian problem. Unless drastic developments occur on the abovementioned fronts, little progress toward peace in the Middle East should be expected, regardless of how many more times Arafat and Hussein meet. After all, Israel is in control of the occupied territories and is pleased with the *status quo*.

The rice and flowers which, Israeli propagandists said, greeted the soldiers of occupation in southern Lebanon have now changed to grenades and gunfire. Hebrew daily *Al Hamishmar*'s **Israel Zamir** spells out to his fellow Israelis the futility of a policy of forced negotiations between occupier and occupied — which the Likud is only using to stay in Lebanon as long as possible.

A Bluff Called 'Security Arrangements'

It is possible to believe that essentially everyone wants to withdraw from Lebanon. The Likud, like the Labour party, claims it has no interest in annexing this miserable country and all it wants is to leave there soon while ensuring — through suitable 'security arrangements' — that Katyushas will not again land in northern border settlements.

Theoretically it is possible to say that there is almost a national consensus. The defence minister, the chief-of-staff, the telecommunications minister and many Knesset members repeat more or less the same text, with guesses to the length of time necessary to achieve those 'security arrangements,' at which time we will leave amid trumpets and rejoicing.

All this sounds short and sweet, if it relates to security arrangements with the Christians, as in the (ex-defence minister Ariel) Sharon version. Then we tried, in our stupidity, to change the regime and impose a president. But this is already history and it is better to forget it as soon as possible.

Nowadays we are stuck in Lebanon, while the south is populated by many Shi'ites. We don't approach them as equals and ask them to sign a treaty because they wander on the streets and we man the tank turrets, patrol and surveil from above: in brief, an overall army of occupation.

Burning Hatred

An occupation army doesn't negotiate with the occupied but dictates peace arrangements. The Allied generals in Germany did this at the end of World War II, like all occupiers to occupied. Negotiations are managed on an equal base, not from above. Sitting above makes the occupier hated by the population and the reaction isn't long in coming. It's a fact that when conquering the villages and townships of southern Lebanon, we were received there with rice and flowers. Now they receive us with grenades and explosives on the roadsides. Something has happened to the Shi'ite sect. Our tanks and armoured cars didn't leave them grinning and apathetic. The good will towards us when we arrived as liberators from the saboteurs' burden has changed in the course of time into a burning hatred.

There's no question about this: we have introduced military rule, with all that this involves, and caused the population great suffering. Now we declare that we have no interest in sitting there and we want an arrangement. However, it is known that in the Shi'ite community itself there have been internal changes as a result of our presence. A tendency towards Khomeinism has developed hatred towards Israel that has become rooted and the organisation of guerrilla cells has started. It is no more the calm Shi'ite community, whose women shower the tanks with rice. This stage has irrevokably passed.

As long as we stay in Lebanon there will be no one to hold negotiations with. The longer we are there the front of rejection and hatred becomes united against us and there is no chance or hope — in the foreseeable future — that a responsible and moderate leadership will be found whom everyone will say 'Amen' to and that would sit to negotiate with us. It is impossible psychologically — just as an American officer was not accepted for negotiations between equals in any southeast Asian township — because the mayor of this township is in an inferior position as long as the tanks are in town.

This comparison is not precise, of course. There will be people who will claim: "Is it possible to compare Israeli officers with American ones?" For heaven's sake! But psychologically, the burning feeling of conquest and offence of the occupied and oppressed are similar. This, even though the Israeli army is an army of the most merciful and its occupation is 'enlightened.' No treaty that would be acceptable to all the Shi'ite community in southern Lebanon can be accepted, even if there were a group of *mukhtars* who would agree to negotiate with us. Such a treaty would be worth as much as the treaty signed on May 17 with Amin Gemayel, and resistance would start again.

Negotiations From The Tank Turrets

Apparently there is no other choice but withdrawal to the international boundary, leaving Shi'ites and Christians and all the rest in place in south Lebanon, and to negotiatie from that point. Of course there should be a warning that if Katyushas are fired again, we will have to respond in force. However, it seems everybody maintains that it would be in the Shi'ite-Christian-Druzes' fundamental interest not to enable the PLO to return to its former (status) in south Lebanon and not to turn their lives into a madness of fire and bloodshed. This is, of course, a daring demand that means indeed that nothing has been achieved during our stay in Lebanon. It is not a compliment to the Likud government because it will have to return to May 1982, to the position as it was before the Lebanon war, with only one difference: in July 1981 a peace treaty with the PLO was achieved on a ceasefire that was maintained for a whole year. If the 'Pines Campaign' hadn't taken place, the silence probably would have been maintained.

Signing peace treaties is possible only from an equal starting point and not when our tanks are parked in Nabatiya, Tyre and Sidon. The burning hatred will torpedo any possible agreement if we continue to negotiate from tank turrets. Therefore, 'security arrangements,' in Likud government parlance, are nothing but a big bluff: a parlance that is the same as hope for the 'end of days.' Anyone who uses it should recognise that they are paying lip service and know that they lie to themselves and to us — that their true intention is to stay in Lebanon for years. (Translation: Al Hamishmar, February 23, 1984).

HaAretz's West Bank correspondent **Zvi Bar'el** assesses how situations have changed — or not changed — since the Lebanon war began. "Disappointed hopes create new rhythms, but always one octave higher," he says and, as far as the PLO is concerned, the rhythms are not in Israel's favour.

Towards a War in Lebanon

The confirmation given by Defence Minister Moshe Arens to the fact that PLO men are in Beirut and may be even south of it has finally concretised the failure of the war. What is happening in Lebanon? The treaty between us and the Gemayel government(?) is dying. Syria manages overtly the affairs of the land of the cedars. The US is not alone in standing with its face toward home. Its soldiers are cleaning the mud off their shoes. We already want to leave the Awali River line and return to a line 15 kilometres north of the international border. Senior government personalities are prepared to say: "Katyushas, never mind. We will not be able to avoid them. The main thing is that actions like in Ma'alot and Misgav Am will not be repeated." The experts for Arab affairs even try at the last minute to find a friend here, a man there.

What is the difference between the situation today and that at the beginning of June 1982? The PLO existed then and exists today. A shattered Lebanese government existed then and an even worse one exists today. Direct Syrian management was the rule then, as it is today. However, in the meantime another opportunity has been missed. It is possible today to detail almost without difficulty the following scenario: while Arafat hops between Yemen and Moscow and the West concentrates eastwards to Jordan, a new Palestinian 'entity' will slowly be consolidated with all the characteristics it had before the war in Lebanon. The Lebanese government that lives in the shadow of Syria will not be able to eliminate the new PLO establishment that will apparently be introduced by the more extreme factions in the organisation. This consolidation will raise a new focus for the (West) Bank Palestinians and will compete with the identification with Arafat. Already today — and indeed from the moment that Abu Mousa appeared — splits began to appear within the Arafat camp on the Bank. The 'separatists' tried to voice their views in leaflets and in closed meetings. However, they remained in an uncountable minority. The status of Abu Mousa — especially after Arafat left Tripoli and his meeting with (Egyptian President Husni) Mubarak — was unclear.

Indeed, internally the pro-Jordanian mood started to strengthen. Jordan has been careful to foster the view that it will very soon enter the political process. The parliament resumed work, emissaries came and went, new initiatives for petitions to support Jordan have started to flourish — and here is a slap in the face. The king announces in the US that he will not now enter into any political negotiation. And an even graver matter, from the (West) Bank inhabitants' point of view, was that Mubarak himself — the symbol of the hated Camp David accords — was the one who raised the Palestinian flag when he demanded in the US that they maintain direct talks with the PLO. From Israel a still small voice hasn't even sounded.

Again there is one of the usual situations on the (West) Bank — a political vacuum is being created. It draws after it a vacuum of expectations. In this matter, the first to arrive wins. Until a week ago the direction of prayer in the (West) Bank was Amman. Today, after the King's 'medical treatment' in the US, even his loyalists turn around to look where their aid will come from. The Arafat supporters closely follow the rhythm of his hopping — from Egypt to Yemen, from there to Qatar, a visit to Bulgaria, from there a jump for a visit of condolence to the Russian people who lost their leader. Within all this, not even one word to his supporters who crave for a sign from him.

Back to the script: Syria, riding now the waves of glory, will aspire 'to annex' the Palestinian problem — perhaps not because of its burning love for the Palestinians but in order to dismantle any Jordanian or Egyptian initiative that might push the Syrians into a dark corner. Syria will want to improve the renewed Palestinian body in Lebanon and will aspire to make it an adequate alternative to the Arafat stream. In the present situation in Lebanon, it will be easy for them to win a position and even prove more militant. And from here it is a short path to conquering Palestinian identification.

In the next stage, the Palestine National Council will be convened to decide on its new representatives. The least bad — from the Israeli point of view — would be if the council would relect Arafat. However, this will be an Arafat with the support of only a small majority. It is more reasonable to presume that the representatives of the new Palestinian body, together with the rejectionist front, will gain the leadership. This new leadership will demand renewed Arab recognition of the exclusivity of representation of this body. Thus we have come full circle.

This is only a scenario. However, in the small cycles of Middle East politics, it has already been proved that similar circumstances appear to be attached to missed opportunities. Disappointed hopes create new rhythms, but always one octave higher.

On the other hand we, having softened the military infrastructure of the PLO, will find ourselves quite soon facing a new infrastructure, and one more difficult to treat. (Translation: HaAretz, February 23, 1984).